Health Information Compliance Alert

Industry News: ONC Research Suggests More Apps and EHRs Working in Tandem

The numbers are in - more EHRs are connecting to software applications to boost data and enhance patient care.

Background: A study initiated by the HHS Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) shows that there's been a 20 percent increase in the number of apps that integrate with certified EHRs, according to a Sept. 24 ONC Health IT Buzz blog post.

"Our research showed that the total number of unique apps and developers increased from 600 to 734 and 517 to 610, respectively, during 2020," say **Wes Barker**, ONC program analyst, and **Christian Johnson**, ONC public health analyst, in the blog. "Administrative apps that handled scheduling, check-in, and billing made up 42 percent of available apps. Clinical apps were also common, comprising 38 percent of apps; these apps perform automated tasks, population health, telehealth, and clinical decision support," Barker and Johnson indicate.

Applications focused on care management, patient engagement, and research also had significant impacts on the study.

Interesting: Originally, ONC began the study to see how the app and EHR markets were integrating and evolving over time. Plus, the health IT agency wanted to find out whether the products were "support[ing the Health Level Seven® (HL7) Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources® (FHIR) standard," Barker and Johnson note.

The research looked not only at the apps providers were connecting to their certified EHR technology (CEHRT), but also at the products patients utilized in their EHR usage.

Peruse the blog and link to the study at
www.healthit.gov/buzz-blog/electronic-health-and-medical-records/research-results-published-more-apps-are-integrating-with-ehrs.