Selecting your EHR
Webinar Schedule

• Successfully Implementing your EHR – February 23 and 26
• Optimizing your EHR for Quality Improvement – March 23 and 26
Why Promote EHR/ HIE?

Effective EHR/HIE Implementation will:

• Improve patient quality of care
• Prevent medical errors
• Reduce health care costs
• Increase administrative efficiencies
• Decrease paperwork
• Expand access to affordable care
EHR Adoption Steps

- Pre-work
- Assessment
- Planning
- *EHR system selection*
- EHR system implementation
- EHR post implementation evaluation
- Clinical system improvement
Review: Pre-work Steps

1. Perform financial/ROI assessment
2. Confirm senior level commitment
3. Assign a physician champion
4. Select EHR implementation team
5. Learn to conduct effective staff meetings
6. Learn EHR hardware and software terms
7. Review recommended EHR functionalities
Review: Assessment Steps

- Perform readiness assessment
- Assess practice culture
- Evaluate the environment for change
- Assess computer skills of all employees
- Assess patient satisfaction
- Evaluate hardware and networking needs
- Perform workflow analysis
Review: Planning Steps

• Create plans: Turn assessment findings into actionable information
• Plan for backloading and scanning paper charts
• Determine Implementation Approach
• Draft internal project plan for EHR implementation
• Define EHR Implementation goals and measurements
EHR Adoption Step 4
EHR System Selection
EHR Selection Steps

- Research vendors and develop a short-list
- Create the vendor selection matrix
- Send RFPs and review responses
- Schedule and attend vendor demonstrations
- Reference site visits
- Negotiate your EHR contract
Step 1
Research Vendors and Create a short-list
Research Vendors—Certified Systems

- Eligible providers must demonstrate meaningful use of a “certified” EHR to receive incentive payments
- Definition of “certified” not known yet. More information in the next few weeks.
- Indications are that CCHIT will NOT be the ONLY certification body
Research Vendors—Other Sources

- Check out vendor websites and view online demo’s
- RFI’s
- Online EHR vendor selection tools
- Group purchased options through hospital or other organization
- Recommendations from colleagues
- Vendor fairs
- Professional associations
Research Vendors—VAR v. Developers

- **Reseller (aka VAR: Value Added Reseller):** An organization who is licensed and authorized to sell and support an EHR product. Resellers may sell/support one product or many.

- **Developer:** The organization that develops and upgrades the EHR.
VARs: Pros and Cons

- When contracting with a VAR, you have no relationship with the actual developer. If the VAR terminates its relationship with the developer you could lose support of your EHR.
- Services, support and pricing offered by the VAR can be different than that of the developer.
- The VAR may not have the same training/knowledge.
- VAR may be locally operated thus more able to offer onsite assistance.
VAR Contracts: Bottom Line

Do your research, ask lots of questions!
Create Short List—Narrowing Choices

- CCHIT or other certification
- ASP v. in-house servers, hosted
- Integrated v. interfaced EHR/PM?
- Specialty specific
Create your Short List

Your short list should have 5-10 vendors
  • with fewer than five, you probably will not see enough vendors to get a feel for the functionality that exists in the market.
  • more than 10, and you will probably lose track of the subtle differences among vendors.
Step 2
Create the Vendor Selection Matrix
Creating the Matrix

• Turn your functionality “wish list” into a list of questions
• If you want CMS incentives, add the meaningful use criteria
• Components: questions, priorities, vendor responses
Step 3
Request RFPs
RFP Key Components

Hardware Requirements
Security
Problem List and Coding
Documentation
Document Management
Support

Result Management
Medications
Reports
Vendor Viability
Implementation Plan
Input devices/interoperability
Review RFP Responses

- Compile responses in one document for comparison
- Add comments on responses
- Make notes of deficient areas
Step 4
Schedule & Attend Vendor Demonstrations
Scheduling the Vendor Demo

• Most vendors will have a “Request Demo” link on their websites
• Be clear about which products you would like to see, the EHR or EHR and PM
• Request an onsite or web demo and ask the vendor what equipment they may need
• Demo should last approximately 1.5 hours for the EHR portion
Scheduling the Vendor Demo

• At a minimum, your physician champion and practice manager should attend, ideally, the entire implementation team would attend.

• Create and send clinical scenarios to the vendor for the demo. This will give you a chance to see the EHR in action.
Attending the Vendor Demo

• Use the vendor selection matrix and ask each vendor the same questions so you can compare vendors

• Review the clinical scenarios you created and ask the vendor to generate clinical reports

• Balance questions with the vendors need to pace the demo within the allocated time to show all functions

• Request references from each of the vendors
Step 5
Visit Vendor Reference Sites
Reference Site Visits

Select sites that are:

• about the same size, configuration, and specialty as your practice.
• in your geographical area.
• using the same PM (assuming you will interface the PM to the EHR).
Reference Site Visits

• Keep in mind that vendors references are just that...vendor references
• Start with phone interviews to get an idea of their experience
• After the phone interviews, you may want to schedule references onsite visits
You can also find references through non-vendor means such as the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) listserves or various other EHR listserves.
Reference Site Visits

- At least one physician and some of the implementation team members should attend.
- Visit the practice while staff are seeing patients so you can see the EHR in action.
- Speak with someone in each area of the practice. Speaking with support staff as well as clinicians will give you a better idea of how the EHR functions.
- Ask LOTS of questions!
Reference Site Visits

After the visit:

• Have a joint debriefing session with your implementation team to discuss findings

• Compare your initial vendor demo notes to the notes from your site visit. Address any discrepancies with the vendor
Step 6
Negotiate Your EHR Contract
These slides represent general information and should not be considered legal advice.
Negotiating Your EHR Contract

- For maximum leverage, enter contract negotiations with at least two vendors
- In general, a contract will be written from the perspective of the vendor
- Be clear on YOUR implementation date preferences
- Do not be afraid to ask for changes!
Contracting Guideline Basics

General

• The contract should have bi-lateral termination clauses without penalty if given within a certain notice period.

• The contract should state that the system will adhere to all regulatory standards (HIPAA, ICD-10, meaningful use)
Contracting Guideline Basics

Software and Hardware

• The contract should explicitly state that you own the data and that the data will be returned should the agreement between the two parties be terminated for any reason.

• The contract should outline the minimum hardware required to sufficiently run the application as demonstrated.

• The contract should have provisions for hardware support if sold with system.
Contracting Guideline Basics

Support

• The contract should outline support hours (including time zone) and the level of support included
• Costs for additional support should be itemized in the contract
• The contract should have a clearly delineated escalation path for issues
• Service level agreements and uptime guarantees should be clearly stated
Contracting Guideline Basics

Interfaces

• For each interface the contract should indicate whether the cost of the interface includes interface programming time and, if so, how many hours are included. It should detail what happens if and when those hours and the associated costs are exceeded.

• The contract should stipulate who is responsible for supporting the interface.
Contracting Guideline Basics

**Training**

- The contract should identify how many training hours are included, how many staff will be trained, and training materials included.

- The contract should stipulate what (if any) follow-up training is provided and the cost.
Contracting Guidelines

Implementation

• The contract should spell out what is and is not included in the implementation costs: what services you will receive, how many hours, who the resources will be, what sort of materials will be provided (e.g., project plan, implementation guides, specs), etc.
Contracting Bottom Line

• It never hurts to ask
• Never take the first offer
• Price is important but don’t sacrifice service
• If the vendor is holding firm on price, try increasing level/amount of services. Education is a good one to add
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