



Comparing Countries' Approach to HIT



Researchers from Finland, U.S, France and beyond created a pilot of four clusters of indicators to compare Health IT across 38 countries.. Findings are published in the *Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association*.

Each country has a different approach towards Health IT. However, in a paper from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, researchers found that a multicountry effort to collect benchmark measures of HIT adoption can provide great insight and could help improve both policy and practice. While the data available varied greatly, the researchers compared the countries on the basis of their use of EHRs, exchange of radiology results and images and acute care facilities with synchronous telehealth capability.

The analysis showed that all but two countries have provider-centric electronic medical records at the point of care. 29 countries had a 75 percent adoption rate of such systems while some had universal adoption. Countries including Netherlands, Canada, Denmark and Sweden had an adoption rate of 75 percent or greater on all three indicators.

The U.S. had a 75 to 100 percent adoption rate for the use of EHRs to store data, a 50 to 74 percent rate for exchanging radiology results and images and less than 50 percent adoption rate for acute care facilities with telehealth capability.

The researchers point out that more countries reported progress of health IT data exchange within certain care settings as compared to information exchange across organisations and care settings. This is probably because of challenges related to interoperability and compatibility of systems.

"[T]here is a strong appetite to learn from and leverage the experiences of other," the authors concluded. "Doing so requires a common understanding of which countries' experiences may be most instructive, what they have done and how they made progress."

Source: Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association.
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