

IT Needs for the Next Generation of Healthcare



Analytics, artificial intelligence, Big Data and machine learning are essential IT capabilities that can help healthcare organisations to compete and thrive in the next generation of healthcare, according to a health IT expert.

Amid rising competition, skilled nursing facilities, home health, assisted living and long-term care organisations are looking for ways to differentiate themselves, drive better care, and reduce the number of adverse events within their patient populations. Healthcare analytics plays a big role in enabling organisations to perform well in this competitive environment. However, analytics is only one piece of a much larger puzzle that is required to get the post-acute care field in order, said Terry Sullivan, MD, chief medical information officer at Onpointe, a post-acute care provider organisation.

“Analytics is an old-fashioned term for what folks are doing today,” Dr. Sullivan pointed out. “There is analytics, there is artificial intelligence, there is Big Data, and there is machine learning. They all come together in cognitive machines and cognitive clinical capabilities. It’s the summation of those four things.”

These days a post-acute care provider organisation that does not have analytics, and is not using an electronic health record, should “close the door and leave town,” the doctor said.

“The world is moving faster than that,” he explained. “In using analytics and artificial intelligence and these other pieces, they are demonstrating where they are at, which is crucial for them to be 21st century players in a competitive marketplace.”

These technologies – analytics, AI, Big Data and machine learning – enable providers to optimise the patient journey. Healthcare organisations require all of those things to perform, because without high-quality information an organisation cannot really participate in the continuum of care and will not be competitive, according to Dr. Sullivan.

“At a minimum the information would involve an EHR that has connections to the referring group above you and to the group below you who you are referring to,” he added.

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