

## Vital Connection between Nurses and Smartphones



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According to a new survey by InCrowd, a Boston-based market intelligence firm, nurses rely more than ever on smartphones for clinical care.

The survey was conducted with 241 nurses and showed that 95 percent of the respondents own a smartphone and 88 percent use smartphone apps at work. 52 percent said that they use an app instead of asking a colleague and 32 percent said they consult their smartphone instead of a physician. 73 percent of the respondents said they use their smartphones to look up drug information on the bedside and 72 percent said they use it to look up diseases and disorders. 69 percent said they use their smartphones to stay in touch with their colleagues as well as use it to view images and set timers for medication administration.

87 percent said their employers do not cover the costs related to their smartphones while 9 percent are reimbursed for their monthly bills, 1 percent is reimbursed for the cost of their smartphone and 3 percent are reimbursed for both the phone and the phone bill. Only 1 percent of the respondents said their institutions ban the use of smartphones while on duty.

The respondents indicated that hospitals are usually very busy and it is not always easy to find someone to bounce ideas with. It thus becomes easier to get the information one needs through their smartphone instead of waiting for a response from a co-worker.

Till now, nurses have been an under-appreciated segment for mHealth technology but now companies are marketing communications platforms that are especially targeted at nurses and are offering a range of nurse-specific apps.

According to Judy Murphy, IBM's Chief Nursing Office, "there's a lot of untapped potential in the use of mobile apps for nursing. It's all about care coordination. Nurses want apps that can help them organise their day."

Nurses are more inclined to use apps that assist their workflow, offer quick information and coordinate multiple activities as compared to physicians who use apps for retrieving information, entering orders and for push notifications. Nurses use apps that can facilitate them in organising their day more effectively – from taking care of multiple patients to addressing orders from doctors.

However, the respondents clarified that smartphones are used to enhance but not substitute for the physician. They are useful when nurses need a quick answer about medications, illnesses or symptoms. They can also help in providing patients with quick answers without calling here and there as well as making educated suggestions to doctors.

Source: mHealthnews

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Published on : Sun, 14 Jun 2015