

DR. KNOW

We won't change the way you do billing...we'll change the way you do business!

EXPLORING THE WORLD OF ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS

Currently, the final phase of HIPAA is the electronic medical record enactment. This is to be implemented within your practice by October 13, 2009. This final rule date is realistically just around the corner. In an effort to help you make a wise and cost effective decision Plexus has done some research to help you chose a system and make sure that it is easy to use and will provide the estimated benefits to your medical practice.

After the first of the year (February 2009) Plexus will have a web-based product that is an extended module of our scheduler and billing systems. If you would like a demonstration of this module and all of its' benefits, please contact us and we will arrange this at your office. At this point, we are unsure of the pricing on this product as it is going through a major renovation to comply with the continuing revisions of the HIPAA guidelines. But, it will give you an idea of what products are out there and you can begin to make your comparisons.

Let's begin by setting up evaluating criteria for the EMR products that are offered. Let's use the following items to define criteria.

1. Cost - how much can you afford to spend? Do you need to update your current software to accommodate it? Do you need to update your hardware? Does it include other modules that you may not use or is it stand-alone? Is the cost per provider, and whom do they consider a provider? Must you pay for training? Is there a fee for updates or upgrades? Do you need a dedicated Internet or phone line?
2. Vendor experience – how many other practices use the system? How familiar are they with the medical industry? Do they have experience in your specialty? How long has this company been in business? Are they willing to give you references? Is the product CCHIT certified? Do they have a contract delineating what they will offer and pricing?
3. Integrated product – is it easy to use? Will it work on any current software you are using? Are you able to electronically download data from current software(s) to populate the product?

NOVEMBER 2008

SPECIAL EDITION

EMR INFORMATION

You can contact us at:

Plexus Health Solutions, Inc.

P.O. Box 0655

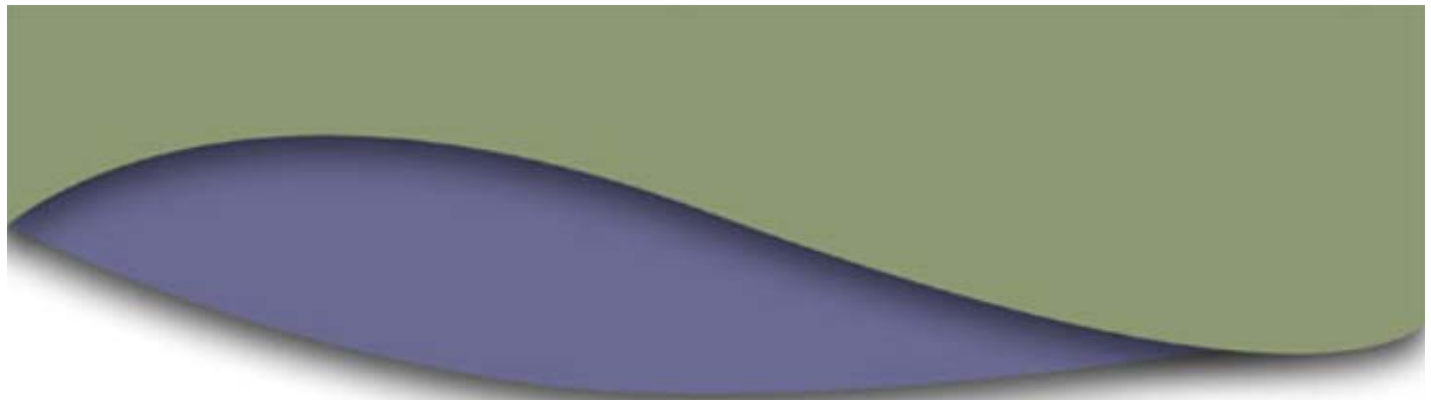
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4. Functionality – are you able to run reports in addition to print records? Are you able to scan documents to it? Can you access it from anywhere? Is it an ASP product or loaded on your server? How many users can you have on it at one time? Does it have HIPAA compliant correction methods? Does it have an electronic signature profile? Is the initial training on –site or remote? Are the CPT-4, ICD-9 and HCPCS codes updated regularly? Is it HIPAA compliant? Who is responsible for backing up the data and how is the data to be backed up?
5. Training and support – who will initially populate the system and create templates? How long is training offered? Is the support phone line toll free? If you need support, are you helped right away or put in a queue to be called back? Are you given a dedicated person to help with implementation?
6. Security – is it password protected with limited access? Can you manage the system or does the vendor?

Now that you have your criteria mapped out, begin to look at products using the CCHIT website.

<http://www.cchit.org/>

Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT) makes it easy to shop. Currently, there are about 55 products that are CCHIT certified. Being CCHIT certified is important because it requires vendors to meet 263 criteria in 41 categories.

Once you have narrowed down your options and choices you can begin to calculate the return on investment (ROI) and the daily/monthly expenditure of the software for your accounting purposes. We have attached a website that will automatically extrapolate these figures for you and help you make an informed, cost effective decision.

http://www.cashflow-technology.com/Cost_Benefit_Analysis.htm

or

<http://www.emrexperts.com/emr-roi/index.php>

There is an article from HFMA on tweaking ROI calculators for higher accuracy.

http://www.hfma.org/hfm/2008archives/month07/HFM0708Thompson_Fleming.htm

We suggest that you take as many demos that you can to get an idea as to the features and ease of operation.

