



IRISH MEDICAL
ORGANISATION
Ceardchumann Dochtúirí na hÉireann

Irish Medical Organisation Submission to the Health Service
Executive (eHealth Ireland) on

Electronic Health Records

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Do you believe Electronic Health Record (EHR) and the Health System will create a positive change in the way you interact with the Health system?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Do you understand what an Electronic Health Record system is?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

How would you like to give consent for health professionals to access your data?

Choose one of the following answers:

- Give consent to enable all professionals involved in my healthcare to access my data under their duty of care to me.
- Only allow access to data once I give consent each time I am cared for.
- I don't know.
- No answer.

Where would you like the programme priorities to focus?

Choose in order of preference 1-3 with 1 being your first priority:

1. Hospitals (for example Beaumont Hospital, New Children's Hospital, Cork University Hospital)
2. Community Healthcare (for example, Health Centres, GP out of hours, Social Work, Mental Health)
3. Specific Healthcare Organisations

What are your thoughts on the potential benefits you would like to see from the EHR Programme?

The IMO supports the development of a national system of electronic healthcare records which would facilitate the storage of medical records and tests using a unique patient identifier. Such a system would enable an integrated approach to the care of individual patients. The potential benefits of a national system of EHRs are numerous - electronic health records can enhance patient safety and quality of care, reduce repetition and errors in diagnostics and treatments and lead to administrative efficiencies. Electronic health records can support integrated care and the smooth transfer of patients between settings. The collection of data also allows for the advance of medical knowledge, management of disease and health service planning.

Do you see any challenges?

Legal clarity on clinical data protection must be contained within the Health Information and Patient Safety Bill, and structures and personnel to support EHR that will guarantee the protection of sensitive data must be emplaced. A regulatory framework must ensure that the data of patients held within EHR systems cannot be accessed or processed as a result of any secondary use unconnected with the provision of patients' treatment, without express consent being granted in each instance. EHR must be capable of capturing all clinically relevant material and must not add administrative burdens to clinical workloads. EHR should have the ability to successfully integrate with existing systems of clinical data, be they within laboratory, radiology, or other systems. Options for implementing EHR must be subject to economic impact assessments, and ring-fenced funding for the development of EHR must be guaranteed to ensure that the system can be developed to a high standard and in a timely manner.