

ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS AND EAST ASIAN MEDICINE: CURRENT EHR STATUS AND PERCEPTIONS OF ACUPUNCTURIST ABOUT EHR

**by
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**Room: Conference-Room
11:00 A.M.**

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Dr. Greg Sperber, BMBS, DAOM, MBA, LAc

**COMMITTEES: Dr. Samantha Hurst, MA, PhD
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Abstract

Background: Under the influence of governmental mandates and incentives, electronic health record use in the United States has become prolific in the last decade. A 2014 CDC report by Hsiao and Hing found that 78% of office-based physicians were using EHRs, up from 21% in 2001. Mandates and incentives are based on Medicare, and with acupuncture not covered by Medicare, acupuncturists/ East Asian Medicine (EAM) practitioners find themselves with no mandate or incentives to implement EHRs. Further, there is little industry wide focus in EAM on EHR implementation and use. With little focus in EAM on EHR use, there is limited published research or data on EHR use in EAM. It is not known the rate of EHR use among acupuncturists/ EAM practitioners, nor perceptions of EHRs held by acupuncturists.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to collect data regarding rates of use of EHRs amongst acupuncturists, identify factors associated with EHR use, and explore perceived benefits and barriers of EHR use held by acupuncturists.

Methods: This study utilized a researcher-designed survey administered to Pacific College of Oriental Medicine alumni who are practicing acupuncturists with more than two years of experience. Following collection of data, results were analyzed with descriptive statistics, chi-squares, and logistic regression. Participation rate was 5.16%- 141 participants out of 2735 eligible alumni.

Results: Among participants, 34.8% were EHR users. 77.1% of EHR users were satisfied with their EHR systems, and 60.4% would recommend their EHR to other acupuncturists. 68.5% of nonusers were familiar with EHRs, 57.6% familiar with EHRs for EAM, and 59.3% believe an EHR would benefit their practice. Common perceived benefits reported by participants were improved practice efficiencies. Common perceived barriers reported by participants were related to financial, technical, time, psychological, and organizational concerns. Variables most associated with EHR use among acupuncturists are practice type and reception to new technology.

Conclusion: Low participation rate resulted in a lack of generalizability with survey results. Results, however, are predictive for future studies. EHR use may be moderately high amongst acupuncturists. Acupuncturists tend to see EHRs as practice management tools, not as patient care tools. Barriers to EHR use for acupuncturists reflect features of EAM practices, but parallel previously published EHR barriers in allopathic medicine.