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Review Article

THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE? NO, THROUGH TWEETS AND WALL POSTS: THE HEALTH REVOLUTION

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ABSTRACT

Health Information Technology has come into force in a big way and has the potential to completely change the face of Medicine for more efficient and satisfactory patient care - it is up to the Medical Community to take advantage of this magnificent resource and everything that it has to offer.

Key Words:

Health IT, Medical IT, Information
Technology, Health Management

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INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is power. And in the field of healthcare, knowledge is the cornerstone of treatment. As science and technology have progressed unhindered, and with their metamorphosis altered and improved treatment regimens with the times, health information technology or “health IT” too has earned its place among the multitude of practices that go into treatment and patient care.

Treatment has progressed beyond remedies and therapies. Today, connectivity, statistics, information and the swiftness and accuracy of treatment are just as important to the patient as the pill they are taking, and health IT facilitates all of this [1].

Health IT is a cornucopia of opportunity and has the unheralded potential to make patient care holistic, faster, more efficient, reduce the likelihood of mistakes, improve patient confidence and compliance and most importantly, it has the ability to make the patient experience truly personal. It allows doctors to monitor patients on the go, access earlier reports and have concurrent updates and also allows for video conferencing [2].

The scope of this new technology is unfathomable. With its proper use, Health IT can greatly reduce the incidence of errors and prevent malicious drug interactions. It may even help

control the cancerous growth of antibiotic resistance due to the improper use of antibiotics. This technology allows for improved care transition from a hospital to an outpatient service and smoothens the return from a treatment facility while allowing for the continued monitoring of the patient post-discharge. It also has applications in Emergency Medicine, for it allows doctors to be prepared and appropriately equipped to deal with the varying situations where every second counts.

This simple yet brilliant applied science is extremely useful in disasters and public health emergencies. It allows for instantaneous dissemination of information and the preservation of medical records and data in a format that will survive the wrath of an earthquake or hurricane and therefore enhances the ability to respond to such situations. It also empowers the patients, allowing them to be better informed and in a better position to make decisions about the methods and modalities of care they are to receive.

Perhaps the most important application of Health Information Technology is that it facilitates the collaboration of different departments in the treatment of a patient. It allows these diverse faculties to work together in a way that will most benefit the patient and support the treatment and recovery, especially in situations where multiple organ systems are involved and the risk of mortality is extremely high.

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There is no shortage of pages on health on networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, and the number of followers to these pages isn't a small number either. The fact is, therefore, that people, in general, are interested to know about their health and what it takes to maintain it, and making the system interactive has shown to directly correspond with patient satisfaction [3].

This interest that is enveloping the new generation is an untamed river, and it is up to those involved in the health care profession to harness this feral energy into something tangible – for wild water can be made to generate energy. But rather than just a power station, this technology can be morphed into something more, the web that connects us all can be an arbor vitae – a literal *Tree of life*.

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