

Health Information Technology Resource Guide

Why is information technology important in health care? The purpose of Health IT is to provide better care for patients and help achieve health equity. Understanding health IT improves the quality of health care delivery, increases patient safety, decreases medical errors, and strengthens the interaction between patients and healthcare providers.

Introduction

Health information technology (HIT) is the use of computers and technology in health and health care. HIT is often used for health information management through computerized systems. Proper HIT can facilitate a secure exchange of information between patients, providers, insurers, and other roles, such as quality monitors.

HIT plays a large role in improving quality of care. It can alert providers to medical errors, improve communication between all parties involved in delivering health care, and making health care delivery more efficient.

A study conducted at four ambulatory care sites found the use of electronic health records was viewed as the most promising tool for improving the overall quality, safety, and efficiency of the health delivery system (Chaudhry, Wang, & Wu, 2006).

Chaudhry B, Wang J, Wu S, Maglione M, Mojica W, Roth E et al. Systematic review: impact of health information technology on quality, efficiency, and costs of medical care. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 2006;144(10):742–52.



Examples of health IT:

- Computerized disease registries
- Computerized provider orders
- Consumer applications
- Electronic medical records (EMRs), electronic health records (EHRs), and personal health records (PHRs)
- Electronic prescribing
- Telehealth

TNA-TONE Webinars

Drivers of Health Information Technology

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Nursing Informatics and Emerging Roles for Nurses in Health

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Legal Aspects of Documenting in the Electronic Health Record

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Unintended Consequences of Using Electronic Health Records

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Collaboration Among Quality, Patient Safety and Health IT to Effect Safe EHR Use

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Nursing Solutions for Common Health IT Challenges

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Transforming Digital Data into Useful Information

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Optimizing Communications with Information Technology: Creating the Environment Conducive to True Progress

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Associations

American Nursing Informatics Association (ANIA)

Useful for HIT nurses, frontline nurses

The ANIA is a national organization that promotes informatics in nursing. Access to an informatics specific library is granted through membership, with regular and student rates. Also provides a newsletter and financial assistance with certification. The ANIA also hosts conferences and webinars, as well as assistance with job placement. Local chapters exist in Dallas–Fort Worth, Houston and South Texas.

Nurses in the HIT industry or interested in HIT can use this website's library to learn about HIT's impact on practice, innovations using HIT and quality improvement using HIT. Leadership and career resources are also available.

▶ [Learn more](#)

American Medical Informatics Association

Useful for HIT nurses, frontline nurses

The AMIA is a national organization that reaches across medical disciplines for the advancement of informatics. Includes connections to news, education, conferences, webinars and policy, along with publications and links to other informatics sources.

This organization is useful for nurses working in HIT or any health care worker interested in gaining HIT knowledge.

▶ [Learn more](#)

Consumer health informatics (CHI), a sub-branch of HIT, bridges the gap between patients and health resources. CHI includes patient-focused informatics, health literacy, and consumer education. With CHI, consumers can manage their own health through online portals and resources with consumer-friendly language.

Publications

ONC Health IT Safety Program

Useful for nurse leaders

Summary report from the ONC and IHI regarding their review of HIT and its impact on patient safety. Includes a link to the report by the IOM, and guides from other cooperating entities to bridge patient safety with HIT practices.

Nursing leaders can use this publication to access resources regarding HIT's impact on patient safety and mitigation strategies

▶ [Read publication \(PDF\)](#)

Identifying and Addressing Ethical Issues with Use of Electronic Health Records

Useful for nurse leaders

This article identifies and addresses ethical issues raised by nurses in the use of electronic health records. These issues require ethical decision-making models to support clinicians in appropriate action on behalf of safe, effective clinical care.

Nursing leaders can use this publication to determine ethical concerns with HIT and access models to support ethical decision-making.

▶ [Read publication](#)

Statewide Study to Assess Nurses' Experiences With Meaningful Use-Based Electronic Health Records

Useful for HIT nurses, nurse leaders

This article, a collaborative effort between the Texas Nurses Association and Texas Organization of Nurse Executives, describes survey results regarding Texas nurses' satisfaction with the use of clinical information systems.

This publication provides information about Texas' nurses perceptions and satisfaction with HIT for nurse leaders and frontline nurses.

▶ [Read publication](#)

ECRI Health IT Safe Practices

Useful for HIT nurses, nurse leaders

The Partnership for Health IT Patient Safety provides an in-depth study of HIT events, safe practice recommendations and toolkits.

Nursing leaders and those working in HIT can use this website to access various HIT toolkits and safety recommendations.

▶ [Read publication](#)

Broad and consistent implementation of HIT can:

- Improve health care delivery and safety
- Increase health care effectiveness or efficiency
- Increase medication safety in pediatric settings
- Reduce health care costs
- Improve clinical processes through ambulatory EHRs
- Improve access to and capture of data

Shekelle, P.; Morton, S.C.; Keeler, E. B. (April 2006). Costs and Benefits of Health Information Technology (Report). Evidence Reports/Technology Assessments. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

Online Resources

Health Information Technology Toolkit for Physician Offices

Useful for frontline nurses, nurse leaders

The HIT Toolkit for Physician Offices offers many practical tools, including tools for technology assessment, vendor selection, workflow and process redesign, an implementation go-live checklist and continuity of care documents.

Ambulatory nurses and leaders can use these tools to understand HIT, assess current state vs desired state, compare vendor requirements, evaluate and improve processes, and develop job descriptions and policies regarding HIT.

▶ [View toolkit](#)

Workflow for Health IT Toolkit

Useful for frontline nurses, nurse leaders

Designed by the Agency for health care Research and Quality, the Workflow for Health IT Toolkit contains educational resources about workflow, tools and examples, research on workflow, and experiences on implementing clinical decision support, e-prescribing, alerts and reminders, and other functionality.

Ambulatory nurses and leaders involved in the planning, design, implementation and use of health IT can use these resources to learn more about HIT workflows and assessing workflows pre and post implementation.

▶ [View toolkit](#)

Emerging Lessons Toolkit

Useful for frontline nurses, nurse leaders

The Emerging Lessons toolkit includes useful information on topics such as chronic disease management, medication adherence and computerized provider order entry.

Nurses and nurse leaders can use these resources to understand HIT initiatives and implementation strategies for bar-coded medication administration, computerized order entry, telehealth, health information exchanges, and medication reconciliation.

▶ [View toolkit](#)

TIGER (Technology Informatics Guiding Education Reform) Initiative

Useful for frontline nurses, nurse educators

The TIGER (Technology Informatics Guiding Education Reform) initiative promotes education reform to foster inter-professional community development and global workforce development. The goal of TIGER is to maximize the integration of technology and informatics into seamless practice, education and research resource development.

Nurses involved in education or those seeking professional development on HIT competencies can use this toolkit to access educational tools, resources and curricula.

▶ [Visit webpage](#)

TIGER Virtual Learning Environment

Useful for frontline nurses, nurse educators

TIGER VLE is an online health information and technology education portal where clinical educators, nurses, students and academic educators can learn core IT competencies from basic to advanced levels for a subscription of \$40. There is free access to a TIGER Marketing Toolkit.

Clinical and academic nurse educators, front-line nurses and students can use this portal to learn core HIT competencies. Requires a fee.

▶ [Visit webpage](#)

SAFER Guidelines

Useful for nurse leaders

Introduction to recommended practices for designing patient safety into HIT implementation and ongoing upkeep of an EHR. Included is an introductory video, links to guides and recommendations for priority practices, contingency planning, decision support, phases of implementation and clinician communication.

This website provides health care leaders with best practice recommendations to optimize the safety and safe use of HIT.

▶ [Visit webpage](#)

Office of the National Coordinator (ONC)

Useful for frontline nurses, nurse leaders

ONC is the principal federal entity charged with coordination of nationwide efforts to implement and use the most advanced health information technology and the electronic exchange of health information. For nurses, there is information on EHRs, its benefits, how to implement EHRs on a systems level, privacy and security in the field of IT, meaningful use information, EHR incentives and a resource center.

This website can be utilized by all health care workers and nurse leaders to learn more about EHRs and their implementation, HIT benefits, privacy and security in HIT, meaningful use and EHR incentives.

▶ [Visit webpage](#)

The Learning Center (powered by HIMSS)

Useful for HIT nurses, frontline nurses, nurse leaders

Website where health care IT leaders and professionals come together to learn, discuss and discover innovations. Contains downloadable resources, videos and live digital events available through this website.

This website provides nurses interested in or working in HIT and leaders educational resources and continuing education for certifications

▶ [Visit webpage](#)

CMS Electronic Health Records (EHR) Incentive Programs

Useful for nurse leaders

Basic information on incentives given by Medicaid and Medicare, timelines, contingencies for reimbursement for EHR use and information relevant to those participating in reimbursement.

Nurse leaders responsible for finances or reimbursement can use this website to obtain information on financial incentives related to HIT.

▶ [Visit webpage](#)

HIMSS Nursing Community

Useful for HIT nurses

The Nursing Informatics Community is a professional community of 8,000+ nurses that provides connections with nursing informatics professionals through discussions on emerging trends, hot topics within the industry and virtual, interactive learning sessions.

Nurses in the HIT industry or interested in HIT can use this website as an educational and networking resource

▶ [Visit webpage](#)

Safety Assurance Factors for EHR Resilience (SAFER) Guides

The [SAFER Guides](#) consist of nine guides organized into three broad groups. These guides enable healthcare organizations to address EHR safety in a variety of areas. Most organizations will want to start with the Foundational Guides, and proceed from there to address their areas of greatest interest or concern.

The guides identify recommended practices to optimize the safety and safe use of EHRs. The content of the guides can be explored on the site or interactive PDF versions of the guides can be downloaded and completed locally for self-assessment of an organization's degree of conformance to the Recommended Practices. The downloaded guides can be filled out, saved, and transmitted between team members.