

# The Value of a Multi-Disciplinary Informatics Team in the Implementation of an Electronic Health Record

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## **Introduction and Background**

Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), a founding member of Partners Health Care, is undergoing a large scale implementation of an integrated vendor based electronic health record (EHR). This project called Partners eCare, is the largest and most complex collaboration across Partners HealthCare to date. A year and a half prior to implementation, MGH formed a multi-disciplinary informatics team to help bridge the gap between clinicians and Partners eCare. “Applied clinical informatics work is highly interprofessional with patient safety implications that heighten the need for best practice models for governance structures, adequate resource allocation, and role-based competencies” (Collins et al., 2015)<sup>1</sup>.

## **Methods**

The Informatics Analyst team comprised of multidisciplinary clinicians (2 physical therapists, 1 respiratory therapist, 1 dietician and 20 nurses) was developed from within the organization. The 20 nurses were selected to represent the variety of departments at MGH - medicine, surgery, cardiac, oncology, neurology, pediatrics, OB, neonatal, behavioral health, perioperative, and ICU, and continued to provide direct care part-time on their home units. The informatics analysts were responsible for supporting the users through all phases of clinical implementation including workflow analysis, hardware walkthroughs, organizational readiness, training and go live support.

## **Results**

The informatics analyst for each department became the expert in the clinical workflow and the liaison between Partners eCare and the clinicians. The informatics analysts have become vital to the understanding of the workflow, identifying a need for change based on EHR knowledge, and identifying barriers to patient safety and experience for each specialty and department. The ability to articulate and disseminate information to nursing leadership and peers has increased acceptance of eCare among their peers. A key component was the development of a strong working relationship between the analysts, leadership and end users of the departments and units they supported.

## **Discussion**

The clinician in the role of informatics analyst has become an essential part of the implementation process at MGH. The Informatics Analysts serve as the liaison between nursing, informatics leadership, clinicians and Partners eCare. They understand the culture of the units and recognize the value of the system to the clinician. Collins et al found that the partnerships across the nursing structure, the medical structure and the information systems (IS) structures are integral to achieve successful outcomes<sup>1</sup>. They also found that informatics needs to be seen as a clinical project in collaboration with IS<sup>1</sup>.

## **References**

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