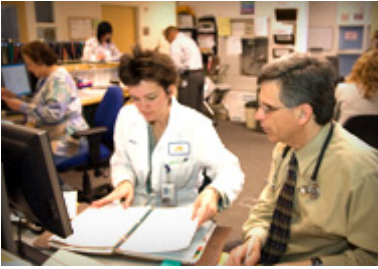


## Study: EHR System Efficiencies Can Cover the Cost of Adoption



Electronic health record systems in less than two years after adoption can create enough cost reductions to pay for the cost of the systems, according to a study published in the July issue of the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*, *HealthDay News/Forbes* reports.

David Krusch, the author of the study, and his colleagues at the University of Rochester analyzed the return on investment of EHR systems at five ambulatory offices representing 28 health care providers. The study compared the costs of tasks -- such as pulling patient charts, creating new charts, filling time, support staff salary and data transcription -- in the third quarter of 2005 to costs in Q3 2003 when the EHR system was not instituted.

Using EHRs reduced costs by almost \$394,000 annually, and nearly two-thirds of the savings were associated with reducing the amount of time for manually pulling charts, the study found. The EHR system in the first year cost \$484,577 to install and manage, which means the hospital recouped its investment in the system within the first 16 months.

The system after the first year cost about \$114,000 annually to operate, which means a yearly savings of more than \$279,500, or almost \$10,000 per provider using the system, the researchers found.

"Health care providers most frequently cite cost as a primary obstacle to adopting an [EHR] system. And, until this point, evidence supporting a positive return on investment for [EHR] technologies has been largely anecdotal," Krusch said (*HealthDay News/Forbes*, 7/12).

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