

Implementing an Electronic Health Record as an Objective Measure of Care Provider Accountability for a Resource-poor Rural Area in the Dominican Republic

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Abstract

The increased availability of open source electronic medical record systems has transformed the ability of short term international medical trip (STIMT) teams to record patient data. This is not only beneficial for providing longitudinal care of a patient population, but it also offers an objective means for evaluating a STIMT's success and enhancing student education. The goal for this project was to assess the feasibility of implementing the Open Medical Record System (OpenMRS) at various resource-poor rural sites. An Electronic Health Record (EHR) based on an OpenMRS platform was developed for use in the primary care setting of a STIMT. Medical and nursing students were trained to use the system in a site-specific simulated environment with Spanish-speaking standardized patients at the Clinical Skills and Simulation Center of UCF College of Medicine. The EHR system, utilizing a laptop, power generator, router, and school-issued iPads, was transported and set up in rural communities surrounding Jarabacoa and the Duarte province in the Dominican Republic. The highly-portable EHR system was successfully deployed on two separate STIMTs by pre-clinical medical students and nursing students to various resource-poor communities across the northern Dominican Republic. The demographics, history, physical exam, assessment, and plan of 825 patients were recorded. Future applications will include its use as an objective means for evaluating interventions, assessing healthcare needs, and providing continuity of patient care. In addition, patient data can be utilized to generate standardized patient scripts for pre-trip simulation training.

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