



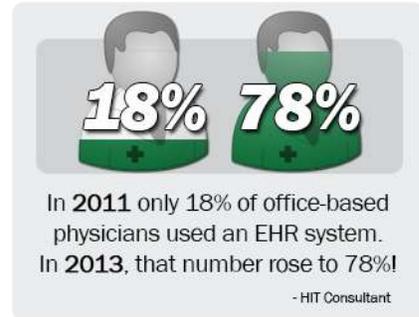
## *Digitech Systems White Paper*

2014

### **ECM, the Prescription for an ill EHR**

Is navigating through your electronic health record (EHR) system painful? Are you delaying because of the cost/difficulty associated with the technology? You may have diagnosed how to implement it at your facility, or you may still be searching for a remedy. Either way, EHR can be confusing and daunting. Consequently, you also know you can't afford NOT to move to an EHR system. What you may not know is that incorporating enterprise content management (ECM) into your EHR strategy acts as a bridge technology. The combination makes the conversion a breeze, and protects your documents to make sure they adhere with the strict and ever-changing Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements. It can also help you claim funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This whitepaper will show you how ECM can nurse your EHR strategy back to health. Time to rip off the Band-Aid!

If you're in the medical field, you most certainly have already converted, are in the process of converting or are about to convert your patient records into an EHR system. Moving records into this format can be somewhat of a headache, but not doing so and failing to meet requirements or comply with regulations is much more painful. With the aggressive updates to HIPAA and the benefits that accompany ARRA, you should be moving with even more haste. Don't get left behind and more importantly, don't get fined! Your peers are moving to an EHR system and you should be too. In 2013, 78% of office-based physicians used an EHR system, up from 18% in 2011. <sup>1</sup> Implementing an EHR system can be tough, but there are tools to help you. ECM helps move and manage your documents in an electronic format, and makes it easy to comply with regulations.



## What is an EHR?

An electronic health record is a digital version of a patient's paper chart. EHRs are real-time, patient-centered records that make information available instantly and securely to authorized users. While an EHR does contain the medical and treatment histories of patients, an EHR system is built to go beyond standard clinical data collected in a provider's office and can be inclusive of a broader view of a patient's care. EHRs can:

- Contain a patient's medical history, diagnoses, medications, treatment plans, immunization dates, allergies, radiology images and laboratory test results
- Allow access to evidence-based tools that providers can use to make decisions about a patient's care
- Automate and streamline provider workflow

### Electronic Health Record Definition:

"One of the key features of an EHR is that health information can be created and managed by authorized providers in a digital format capable of being shared with other providers across more than one health care organization. EHRs are built to share information with other health care providers and organizations – such as laboratories, specialists medical imaging facilities, pharmacies, emergency, facilities, and school and workplace clinics – so they contain information from *all clinicians involved in a patient's care.*"

-HealthIT.gov

Because medicine is an information-rich enterprise, EHRs can help create a more seamless flow of information within a digital healthcare infrastructure. EHRs leverage digital processes and can therefore transform the way care is delivered and compensated.<sup>2</sup>

## Legal Ramifications

Implementing a successful EHR will not only improve the way you run your healthcare facility, it protects you from certain legal ramifications. Through regulations like HIPAA and ARRA, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is urging the industry to manage information electronically. Are you in compliance?

## HIPAA

Patient privacy, it's no joke! As a healthcare professional, you are well aware of HIPAA, and you're following its rules. Passed in 1996, the Act was designed to protect the privacy of individual medical information and to ensure data security for information being managed and stored by healthcare providers. HIPAA regulations ask providers to protect the privacy of personally identifiable information, otherwise known as Protected Health Information (PHI), to guard against unauthorized access to records, to enable audit tracking of all uses of PHI, and to simplify exchanges of information between providers. Healthcare providers who do not comply are subject to fines and potential litigation. In fact, HIPAA was updated in 2013 with an HHS ruling that increased enforcement and penalties for noncompliance up to \$1.5 million per violation.



“This final omnibus rule marks the most sweeping changes to the HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules since they were first implemented. These changes not only greatly enhance a patient’s privacy rights and protections, but also strengthen the ability of my office to vigorously enforce the HIPAA privacy and security protections, regardless of whether the information is being held by a health plan, a healthcare provider, or one of their business associates.”

-Leon Rodriguez  
Director, Office for Civil Rights, HHS

## ARRA

Could your healthcare facility use extra funds? Congress passed ARRA with this in mind. A direct response to the economic crisis of 2008, ARRA directed \$150 billion in new funds to the healthcare industry, with \$19.2 billion of that for health information technology specifically. This was governed by the 2009 Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH), a subset of ARRA that essentially rewards healthcare organizations that move records to an electronic format with an incentive of government funds.<sup>3</sup>

### *Meaningful Use*

It's not as simple as making your healthcare records electronic. To get reimbursed, you have to prove it. The Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs provide financial incentives for the “Meaningful Use” of certified EHR technology. To receive an EHR incentive payment, providers have to show that they are “meaningfully using” their certified EHR technology by meeting certain measurement thresholds that range from recording patient information as structured data to exchanging summary care records.

Providers began participating in 2010 by meeting the Stage 1 requirements for a 90-day period in their first year of meaningful use and a full year in their second year of meaningful use. After meeting the Stage 1 requirements, providers will then have to meet Stage 2 requirements for two full years starting in 2014. Eventually they'll have to meet the stage 3 criteria, expected in 2016.<sup>2</sup>

## Meaningful Use Criteria

<b>Stage 1</b> 2011- 2012 Data Capture and Sharing	<b>Stage 2</b> 2014 Advanced Clinical Processes	<b>Stage 3</b> 2016 Improved Outcomes
Electronically capturing health information in a standardized format	More rigorous health information exchange (HIE)	Improving quality, safety, and efficiency, leading to improved health outcomes
Using that information to track key clinical conditions	Increased requirements for e-prescribing and incorporating lab results	Decision support for national high-priority conditions
Communicating that information for care coordination processes	Electronic transmission of patient care summaries across multiple settings	Patient access to self-management tools
Initiating the reporting of clinical quality measures and public health information	More patient-controlled data	Access to comprehensive patient data through patient-centered HIE
Using information to engage patients and their families in their care		Improving population health

-HealthIT.gov<sup>2</sup>

### ECM Makes EHR a Breeze

Moving to an EHR system is a natural evolution for the healthcare industry. It enhances your business by improving productivity, better protects your records behind tight security and can even save you money. Plus, doing so allows for some perks such as taking advantage of the ARRA funds or avoiding feeding the hungry, hungry HIPAA. But, no one said it would be easy. In fact, the primary reason some healthcare facilities have not converted to an EHR system or are struggling to do so is because of how difficult it is. Why? Patient information is scattered across paper records, electronic files, multiple applications and disparate systems, and most EHR applications cannot integrate this information into their patient records. Contributing factors include:

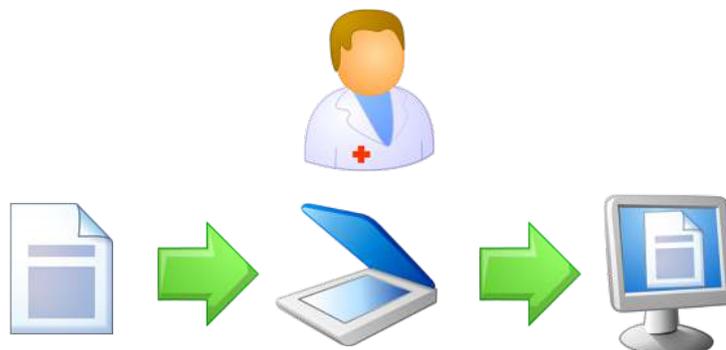
- Day-forward implementations do not provide a historic view of past patient visits or treatment.
- There is always a price for change. With EHR, those costs include the price of the technology, implementation, and lost productivity as employees retrain on new processes and procedures.
- Because they lack historic patient information, doctors are not making better, more informed decisions, and clinics and practices are trapped in the throes of employee change management. As a result patient care is suffering.

Sound familiar? Don't worry; there is technology that can help. ECM acts as a bridge technology to close some of the gaps in an EHR implementation. When completing a patient's record, a lot of information has to be assembled. Multiple providers in many places generate massive amounts of data. Even if a hospital already utilizes EHRs, physician offices may still fax orders to hospitals. Nurses might still document a physician's verbal order on a piece of paper. And don't forget patient insurance cards and personal identification. All of that information needs to find its way to the EHR. <sup>4</sup>

### Here's How it Works

Acting as a bridge technology, ECM moves information to the patient record. ECM also offers the security and data management features critical to a successful compliance program, and features better flexibility, allowing you to work not just with EHRs, but other business records as well. ECM doesn't replace an EHR system; it simply takes it one step further and makes the process of converting less stressful. When ECM and EHRs work in tandem, the system runs more smoothly. Here's how it works:

- Scanning applications convert paper records into electronic images, which can be accessed directly within the EHR as part of the patient file when the two systems are integrated. Therefore, one search returns a full patient view.
- ECM offers the security required for private health information in compliance with HIPAA, ARRA, and Meaningful Use, among others.
- ECM can ingest almost any type of data including paper files such as signed prescription pads or handwritten orders, email messages, and electronic records from systems including insurance or accounting.
- Forms processing and optical character recognition (OCR) capabilities convert information contained on an image of a paper record into usable, searchable data that can be used to populate databases or to locate a specific condition or treatment.



### Real Results:

Ever since **The Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD)** implemented an ECM system, documents are much safer in their electronic format. Managing records digitally also makes it easier for MHCD to adhere to HIPAA regulations. They are doing so well, in fact, that the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) already awarded MHCD their first grant of federal government incentive funds to help offset costs associated with implementing an EHR system.





“ECM offers a more flexible means for organizing medical information than most EHR systems, easing the transition to EHR. Rather than asking employees to adjust to methods and processes as dictated by the EHR application, ECM systems are almost completely customizable. They can be setup to maintain records using any unique search terms a specific practice might require. Individual providers can also setup custom processes to route information through reviews, approvals, authorizations, or other processes unique to their business.”

-Sean Morris  
Director of Sales, Digitech Systems

## Your Benefits

What are you waiting for? If you haven't implemented an EHR system at your healthcare facility yet, or if yours needs some TLC, consider ECM. It's designed to support this process. How would morale change if your staff could review all of a patient's records with one simple and efficient search? Soon you'll be able to retrieve any piece of information in the system through the use of index values that identify the records. Your staff will be able to search your EHR system by keyword and receive a listing of all records associated to that value. Plus, you'll be able to capture that index information quickly and accurately or import it from outside databases. Frisbie Memorial Hospital recognizes these benefits first hand.

“The benefits of our ECM system have stretched across the entire organization, which has allowed us to further leverage the system and the savings,” said Dr. Robert Anthony, Director of Emergency, who explained how effective information management has benefited the entire organization. Auditing processes and peer reviews are more efficient now. The billing department can view invoices remotely and ensure billing code accuracy, and the legal department has noticed an increase in the quality of documentation.

ECM also includes sophisticated security features that allow you to control your users' record access to only authorized personnel and that can block out the personal information from a given record for those who are not authorized to see it. It doesn't end there. Package and encrypt your information for documented disclosure or back-up to any media.

You may be scared of EHR (and therefore ECM) because of the cost, but in truth you'll see a return on investment and then some. In fact, Nucleus Research found that every dollar spent on ECM technology returns \$7.50! The financial benefits of using ECM as a bridge technology for your EHR system go far beyond qualifying for government incentives. Moving records to an electronic format will allow you to reduce your personnel costs by collecting patient information from websites, intranets and customer kiosks. Plus, save valuable resources by switching from a capital expensive to an operating expense.

Does this sound like the remedy you've been aching for? Get going! Do your research on ECM, find a provider and solution that will marry nicely with your existing system and finally, start seeing improvements! ECM could be the perfect prescription for your under-the-weather EHR system.

## Works Cited

<sup>1</sup> 15 Statistics about EHR Adoption in Office-Based Physician Practices, HIT Consultant, Fred Pennic, <http://hitconsultant.net/2014/03/21/15-statistics-about-ehr-adoption-in-office-based-physician-practices/>

<sup>2</sup> What is an electronic health record (EHR)?, HealthIT.gov, <http://www.healthit.gov/providers-professionals/faqs/what-electronic-health-record-ehr>

<sup>3</sup> American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Healthcare IT Index, Healthcare IT News, <http://www.healthcareitnews.com/directory/american-recovery-and-reinvestment-act-arra>

<sup>4</sup> ECM's Role in EHR Meaningful Use, Healthcare Technology Online, Ken Congdon, [http://images.vertmarkets.com/crlive/files/downloads/74bc7c5e-df39-45bd-8657-e9f685b096d0/ECM\\_EHR\\_Roundtable.pdf](http://images.vertmarkets.com/crlive/files/downloads/74bc7c5e-df39-45bd-8657-e9f685b096d0/ECM_EHR_Roundtable.pdf)



## Additional Resources

There are a lot more opportunities to learn about EHRs! The resources below provide additional guidance while navigating your way through the world of understanding EHRs and ECM alike.

### Digitech Systems

At Digitech Systems, ECM is our bread and butter. We want to help you understand what ECM is and our website is one of the best places for you to learn more about the technology, accompanying products, education and expertise we offer.

[www.digitechsystems.com](http://www.digitechsystems.com)

#### *Compliance and Industry Briefs:*

##### **Compliance Brief: HIPAA**

[http://www.digitechsystems.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/HIPAA\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.digitechsystems.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/HIPAA_WEB.pdf)

##### **Industry Brief: Healthcare**

[http://www.digitechsystems.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Healthcare\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.digitechsystems.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Healthcare_WEB.pdf)

#### *Digitech Systems White Papers:*

##### **Enterprise Content Management for You!**

<http://www.digitechsystems.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ECM101-WhitePaper-2012-FINAL.pdf>

##### **Ten Security and Reliability Questions to Address Before Implementing ECM**

[http://www.digitechsystems.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/TenQuestionsBeforeBuyingECM\\_2012Updated.pdf](http://www.digitechsystems.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/TenQuestionsBeforeBuyingECM_2012Updated.pdf)

#### *Digitech Systems Case Studies*

##### **Frisbie Memorial Hospital Saves 3,000 Hours Annually with ImageSilo**

<http://www.digitechsystems.com/frisbie-memorial-hospital-saves-3000-hours-annually-with-imagesilo/>

##### **Mental Health Center of Denver uses PaperVision® Enterprise to Complement EMR Security and Efficiency**

<http://www.digitechsystems.com/mental-health-center-of-denver-uses-papervision-enterprise-to-complement-emr-security-and-efficiency/>

##### **ImageSilo streamlines patient records system for University of Illinois Medical Center at Chicago**

<http://www.digitechsystems.com/imagesilo-streamlines-patient-records-system-for-university-of-illinois-medical-center-at-chicago/>

##### **PaperVision® Enterprise Improves Productivity by 80% for Baton Rouge EMS**

<http://www.digitechsystems.com/papervision-enterprise-improves-productivity-by-80-for-baton-rouge-ems/>

##### **ImageSilo® Helps National Jewish Medical Center Streamline Processes While Maintaining HIPAA Compliance**

<http://www.digitechsystems.com/imagesilo-helps-national-jewish-medical-center-streamline-processes-while-maintaining-hipaa-compliance/>



### **HIT Consultant**

Hit Consultant is an award winning healthcare technology organization focused on providing insightful coverage of healthcare innovation. On this site you'll find articles, statistics and detailed research on anything and everything that involves healthcare technology (Health IT).

<http://hitconsultant.net/>

### **HealthIT.gov**

HealthIT.gov is a national resource on health IT for consumers and health care professionals. They provide education and materials on EHR, Meaningful Use and general health care news and updates.

<http://www.healthit.gov>

### **AIIM**

Get more information on ECM and industry research from the ECM industry perspective. This organization follows the industry closely for news, updates, market watch and more.

<http://www.aiim.org>



## Digitech Systems, Inc.

Digitech Systems, Inc. enables businesses of any size to more effectively and securely manage, retrieve and store corporate information of any kind using either PaperVision® Enterprise content management (ECM) software or the world's most trusted cloud ECM service, ImageSilo®. By significantly reducing the cost, Digitech Systems has moved ECM from a luxury convenience to an essential element for every well-managed business.

Digitech Systems continues to raise the standard of excellence in the ECM sector, as evidenced by the numerous awards they have received including the InfoWorld 100, CRN's Emerging Tech Dynamos and multiple Nucleus Research ROI Awards. In addition, Buyer's Lab recognized PaperVision Capture as the Outstanding Enterprise Capture Product for 2012. To learn more about the company's software and services that deliver any document, anywhere, anytime, visit [www.digitechsystems.com](http://www.digitechsystems.com).

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