
In 2016, 94% of pediatricians reported using EHRs at their main practice site to provide direct patient care, up from 79% in 2012 and 58% in 2009 (see figure). Substantial increases in EHR use have occurred over time and across a range of demographics, work characteristics and practice settings.

From 2009-’16, pediatricians reported improved EHR functionality, including increased availability of features like viewing lab results and ordering prescriptions electronically. Although the overall trend is toward the use of higher-performing systems, relatively few pediatricians report using fully functional, pediatric-specific EHRs that include features such as weight-based dosing, tracking immunization schedules and plotting growth charts (8% in 2012 and 17% in 2016).

Pediatricians were more likely in 2016 than in 2012 to report that their EHR has a major positive impact on practice activities, including communications with patients/parents (13% vs. 9%), appropriate immunization delivery (20% vs. 13%), well-child care (15% vs. 9%), measuring quality (39% vs. 15%) and generating new prescriptions and refills (44% vs. 29%). However, the percentage of pediatricians who felt their EHR had a positive impact on communication with other providers decreased from 26% to 20%.
When asked about perceived barriers to adopting EHRs in 2016 and 2012, the percentage of pediatricians reporting financial challenges remained the same, and organizational and technical barriers decreased slightly. However, concerns about inappropriate disclosure of patient information and hacking of EHRs increased.

"While there has been significant progress made in EHR adoption among pediatricians over time, the lack of pediatric-specific functionalities in many EHRs suggests room for improvement going forward," said Christoph U. Lehmann, M.D., FACMI, FAAP, study co-author and medical director of the AAP Child Health Informatics Center. “The AAP’s successful effort to include language on pediatric certification of EHRs into the 21st Century Cures Act should continue to place positive pressure on the industry to improve the functionalities in their products.”

Each year, the Periodic Survey was sent to approximately 1,600 non-retired AAP members in the U.S. Response rates were 44% in 2016, 54% in 2012 and 57% in 2009. Analysis was restricted to post-residency respondents who provide direct patient care.

**Resources**

- AAP policy statement "Health Information Technology and the Medical Home"
- AAP Child Health Informatics Center
- Electronic Health Records for Pediatricians: A Shopper’s Guide
- Additional Research Update columns

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