“Reducing Clinician Burden” Project

Health Level Seven (HL7)
Electronic Health Record Work Group (EHR WG)

30 March 2020
Moral Injury? 
Clash of Clinical and Business Models?

- “[Clinicians know] how best to care for their patients but [are] blocked from doing so by systemic barriers related to the business side of health care.”

  — Washington Post: “Too many tests, too little time: Doctors say they face ‘moral injury’ because of a business model that interferes with patient care” – 1 February 2020
3 out of 4 physicians believe that EHRs increase practice costs, outweighing any efficiency savings – Deloitte Survey of US Physicians, 2016

7 out of 10 physicians think that EHRs reduce their productivity – Deloitte

4 in 10 primary care physicians (40%) believe there are more challenges with EHRs than benefits – Stanford Medicine/Harris Poll, 2018

7 out of 10 physicians (71%) agree that EHRs greatly contribute to physician burnout – Stanford/Harris

6 out of 10 physicians (59%) think EHRs need a complete overhaul – Stanford/Harris

Only 8% say the primary value of their EHR is clinically related – Stanford/Harris

[Physicians express that EHR] systems had detracted from professional satisfaction (54%) as well as from their clinical effectiveness (49%) – Stanford/Harris
Quantifying the EHR Burden
Few Clinicians Involved in EHR Decision

- "No other industry... has been under a universal mandate to adopt a new technology before its effects are fully understood, and before the technology has reached a level of usability that is acceptable to its core users." — New England Journal of Medicine, Transitional Chaos or Enduring Harm? The EHR and the Disruption of Medicine, 22 Oct 2015

- "Many clinicians know what they want — but haven't been asked... Our biggest mistake lies not in adopting clunky systems but in dismissing the concerns of the people who must use them." — Ibid.

- “Few physicians and nurses were involved in the decision-making process of which EHR to implement in their workplace. Of physician participants, 66 percent said they had no input, 28 percent had input... Of nurse and [advance practice nurse] participants, 80 percent said they had no input, 18 percent had input...” — Becker's Healthcare - [Survey finds] Nearly half of physicians think EHRs have decreased quality of care, 1 May 2019

- "Of the physician and nurse/APRN participants who had input in choosing their workplace's EHR system, just 2 percent said the system they wanted was chosen." — Ibid.
“Although the original intent behind the design of EHRs was to facilitate patient management and care, the technology largely has been co-opted for other purposes.
- **Payers** see the EHR as the source of billing documentation.
- **Health care enterprises** see it as a tool for enforcing compliance with organizational directives.
- **The legal system** sees the EHR as a statement of legal facts.
- **Public health entities** see it as a way to use clinicians to collect their data at drastically reduced costs.
- **Measurement entities** see the EHR as a way to automate the collection of measure data, reducing their reliance on chart abstraction.
- **Governmental entities** see it as a way to observe and enforce compliance with regulations.

“All these impositions on EHR systems have created distractions from their potential value in supporting care delivery... The ability of these systems to support care delivery will not improve unless physicians and others who deliver care insist that the functions needed by clinicians and their patients take priority over non-clinical requirements.”

— American College of Physicians, Putting Patients First by Reducing Administrative Tasks... 2 May 2017
### Reducing Clinician Burden

#### Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT – Burden Targeted</th>
<th>WHO – Might Best Address Burden</th>
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<tr>
<td>In Clinical Practice – At Point of Care</td>
<td>Providers, Clinical Professional Societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In System/Software Design</td>
<td>EHR/HIT System Developers/Vendors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In System/Software Implementation</td>
<td>EHR/HIT System Implementers, Providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Health Informatics Standards, e.g.</td>
<td>Standards Developers/Profilers:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• EHR System Functional Model/Profiles</td>
<td>• HL7, ISO TC215, DICOM, IHE, NCPDP, ASC X12N, SNOMED...</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Messages (HL7 v.2x), Documents (HL7 CDA), Resources (HL7 FHIR)</td>
<td>Standards Coordinating Bodies</td>
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<td>• Implementation Guides (C-CDA, IPS)</td>
<td>• Joint Initiative Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Vocabulary...</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Regulation, Policies</td>
<td>Government, Accreditation Agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Claims, Payment Policies</td>
<td>Public and Private Payers</td>
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30 March 2020

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### Reducing Clinician Burden

**Defining Terms (DRAFT)**

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<th>Reducing (reduce)</th>
<th>Clinician</th>
<th>Burden</th>
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<td>“To bring down, as in extent, amount, or degree; diminish”, and “To gain control of... [to] conquer”, and “To simplify the form of... without changing the value”, also “To restore... to a normal condition or position” – The Free Dictionary</td>
<td>“A health professional whose practice is based on direct observation and treatment of a patient” – Mosby’s Medical Dictionary</td>
<td>“A source of great worry or stress”, and “[Something that] cause[s] difficulty [or] distress”, also “To load or overload” – The Free Dictionary</td>
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<td>“To lower in... intensity” – Dictionary.com</td>
<td>“An expert clinical practitioner and teacher” – Miller-Keane Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health</td>
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<td>“To narrow down”, also “To bring to a specified state or condition” – Merriam-Webster</td>
<td>“A health professional, such as a physician, psychologist, or nurse, who is directly involved in patient care” – American Heritage Medical Dictionary</td>
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**Reducing Clinician Burden**

**Defining Terms (DRAFT)**

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- “Something that is carried, [as in a] duty [or] responsibility”, also “Something oppressive or worrisome” – Merriam-Webster Dictionary
Reducing Clinician Burden
Defining Terms (DRAFT)

| Clinician Burden | Anything that hinders patient care, either directly or indirectly [such as]:
|                 | 1) Undue cost or loss of revenue,
|                 | 2) Undue time,
|                 | 3) Undue effort,
|                 | 4) Undue complexity of workflow,
|                 | 5) Undue cognitive burden,
|                 | 6) [Uncertain quality/reliability of data/record content,]
|                 | 7) Anything that contributes to burnout, lack of productivity, inefficiency, etc.,
|                 | 8) Anything that gets in the way of a productive clinician-patient relationship.
|                 | -- Peter Goldschmidt |
Average characters per ambulatory progress note in U.S. and international health systems.

Source: Annals of Internal Medicine – Physician Burnout in the Electronic Health Record Era: Are We Ignoring the Real Cause? N Lance Downing MD, David W Bates MD MSc, Christopher A Longhurst MD MS, 8 May 2018

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Reducing Clinician Burden

Burden Can Lead to Burnout

- “‘Physician burnout’ has skyrocketed to the top of the agenda in medicine. A 2018 Merritt Hawkins survey found a staggering 78% of doctors suffered symptoms of burnout, and [recently] the Harvard School of Public Health and other institutions deemed it a ‘public health crisis.’”

From: Physician stress and burnout: the impact of health information technology
From: Physician stress and burnout: the impact of health information technology
What Contributes Most to Burnout?

- Too many bureaucratic tasks (e.g., charting, paperwork) 55%
- Spending too many hours at work 33%
- Lack of respect from administrators, employers, colleagues, or staff 32%
- Increasing computerization of practice (EHRs) 30%
- Insufficient compensation, reimbursement 29%
- Lack of control, autonomy 24%
- Feeling like a cog in a wheel 22%
- Decreasing reimbursements 19%
- Lack of respect from patients 17%
- Government regulations 16%
- Other 7%

15 Jan 2020
Reducing Clinician Burden Project

Overview

- As of late 2018, “Reducing Clinician Burden” is a formal project of the HL7 EHR Work Group
- Is open and collaborative – oriented to US and international interests
- Primary focus is on clinician burden including time & data quality burdens associated with:
  - Use/engagement of EHR/HIT systems
  - Capture, exchange and use of health information
- Considering:
  - Clinical practice – at the point of care
  - Regulatory, accreditation, administrative, payor mandates
  - EHR/HIT system design, functionality, usability and implementation
  - Data quality and usability
- Has undertaken an extensive review of reference sources to document the substance, impact and extent of clinician burden
  - Trade publications, professional society journals, articles, studies, personal experience
Continues work to identify root causes in each RCB topic area (not limited to EHR system functionality and usability issues - although that is important)
- What is the problem and its source?
- Why did it happen?
- What will be done to prevent it from happening (now and in the future)?
- Who (stakeholder(s)) might best address burden?

Looking for success stories specifically addressing burden reduction and burnout
Plan to use our findings as part of the foundation (and springboard) for EHR-S FM R3
Will influence future directions for HL7 and other standards development efforts

Goal is not to boil the ocean, rather to understand the substance, extent and impact of the burden, to recognize root causes and to identify success stories.
# Reducing Clinician Burden – Breaking It Down

## Topics/Categories

1. Clinician Burden – In General
2. Patient Safety (and Clinical Integrity)
3. Administrative tasks
4. Data entry requirements
5. Data entry scribes and proxies
6. **Clinical documentation**: quality and usability
7. Prior authorization, coverage verification, eligibility tasks
8. Provider/patient face to face interaction
9. Provider/patient communication
10. Care coordination, team-based care
11. **Clinical work flow**
12. Disease management, care and treatment plans
13. **Clinical decision support, medical logic, artificial intelligence**
14. Alerts, reminders, notifications, inbox management
15. Information overload
16. Transitions of care
17. Health information exchange, claimed “interoperability”
18. Medical/personal device integration
19. Orders for equipment and supplies
20. Support for payment, claims and reimbursement
21. Support for cost review
22. Support for measures: administrative, operations, quality, performance, productivity, cost, utilization
23. Support for public and population health
24. Legal aspects and risks
25. User training, user proficiency
26. Common function, information and process models
27. Software development and improvement priorities, end-user feedback
28. Product transparency
29. Product modularity
30. **Lock-in, data liquidity, switching costs**
31. Financial burden
32. Security
33. Professional credentialing
34. Identity matching and management
35. **Data quality and integrity**
36. Process integrity
37. **List Management**: problems, medications, immunizations, allergies, surgeries, interventions and procedures

Blue = Focus Teams Formed
Reducing Clinician Burden Project

Focus Teams

- Clinical documentation, quality and usability
  - Lead: Dr. Lisa Masson (lisa.masson@cshs.org)
- Clinical decision support, medical logic, artificial intelligence + Alerts, reminders, notifications, inbox management + Information overload
  - Lead: Dr. James McClay (jmcclay@unmc.edu)
- Clinical workflow
  - Lead: Dr. David Schlossman (dschloss39@gmail.com)
- Legal aspects and risks
  - Lead: Dr. Barry Newman (barrynewman@earthlink.net)
- System lock-in, data liquidity, switching costs
  - Lead: Dr. Michael Brody (mbrody@tldsystems.com)
- State of data content quality
  - Leads: Dr. Reed Gelzer (r.gelzer@trustworthyehr.com)
Reducing Clinician Burden
Success Stories

1. Reducing Clinician Burden: Cardiovascular Procedure Reporting at Duke
   James Tcheng MD, Duke University

2. "Home for Dinner" - Reducing After Hours Documentation with Focused Training
   Greta Branford MD, University of Michigan

3. Benefits of SNOMED CT from a clinical perspective, The Rotherham experience
   Monica Jones, NHS Rotherham Foundation Trust (UK)

4. Getting Time Back in Your Day! Implementing a Multi-Faceted Approach to Optimizing Epic in the
   Ambulatory Setting
   Jeff Tokazewski MD, Carole Rosen, Shane Thomas, University of Pennsylvania

5. Well-Being Playbook, A Guide for Hospital and Health System Leaders
   Elisa Arespacochaga, American Hospital Association
Reducing Clinician Burden

Success Stories

6. **Understanding the Impact of the EHR on Physician Burnout and Wellness**
   Christopher Sharp MD, Lindsay Stevens MD, Stanford University/Stanford Health Care

7. **SPRINT – An Organizational Strategy that Increases Satisfaction, Improves Teamwork and Reduces Burnout**
   Amber Sieja MD, University of Colorado School of Medicine, UCHealth

[More to come...]
2019 USE CASE INVENTORY & STATUS

- Data Exchange for Quality Measures
- Coverage Requirements Discovery
- Documentation Templates and Coverage Rules
- Health Record Exchange: Framework/Library
- Clinical Data Exchange
- Prior-Authorization Support
- Payer Data Exchange
- Payer Data Exchange: Provider Network
- Payer Data Exchange: Formulary
- Alerts/Notifications: Transitions in Care; ER admit/discharge
- Payer Coverage Decision Exchange
- Gaps in Care & Information
- Health Record Exchange: Patient Data Exchange
- Patient Cost Transparency
- Risk Based Contract Member Identification
- Performing Laboratory Reporting
- Chronic Illness Documentation for Risk Adjustment

PROJECT PROCESS
Define requirements (technical, business and testing)
- Create Implementation Guide
- Create and test Reference Implementation (prove the guide works)
- Pilot the solution
- Deploy the solution

Source: HL7
Reducing Clinician Burden Project

Some Standards Focused on Burden

- HL7 Da Vinci Project – Provider ↔ Payer Communication
  - Coverage Determination
  - Pre Authorization
  - and more...

- HL7 EHR System Usability Functional Profile
  - Functions and Conformance Criteria to Enhance System Usability
  - Passed ballot, in preparation for publication

- ISO/HL7 10781 EHR System Functional Model, Release 3
  - In early design/development stage

- Patient Summary Burden
  - Including Data Quality/Integrity, Information Overload...
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Materials

- Project Documents – Project Website
  - Project Overview, Presentations
  - DRAFT RCB Analysis Worksheet
  - Reference Sources
  - Success Stories
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Schedule

- Teleconferences, Monday at 3PM ET (US/Canada)
  - 1st and 3rd Mondays each month
    6 and 20 April, 4 and 18 May 2020...
  - [https://global.gotomeeting.com/meeting/join/798931918](https://global.gotomeeting.com/meeting/join/798931918)

- Next Face-to-Face
  - HL7 Working Group, Baltimore, Sep 2020 (tentative)
Reducing Clinician Burden Project

Contacts

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- Pele Yu MD: pele.yu@archildrens.org
  Arkansas Children’s Hospital/University of Arkansas
Comments may also be directed to:
- US Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS)
  reducingproviderburden@cms.hhs.gov
A. Burdens
B. Burnout
C. RCB Topics/Index
D. Time Burdens
E. Data Quality Burdens
F. Clinician Stories
G. Terms: Reducing, Clinician, Burden
H. Root Causes
I. Reference Sources
J. Leads: EHR WG Co-Chairs
K. Acknowledgements: Reviewers + Contributors
First Tab – Burdens – Columns
B) Clinician Burdens (the current situation) – Raw Input
C) Recommendations – Raw Input
D) Reference Sources
E) Targeted RCB Recommendation(s) – refined from our reference (and other) sources
F) RCB Proposals and Successful Solutions