

BUSINESS

Know your EMR needs (Towards the Electronic Patient Record conference)

With more vendors entering the industry, experts say, physicians can be choosy about their technology. But first identify your key choices.

By [Pamela Lewis Dolan](#), AMNews staff. July 14, 2008.

When Cleveland internist James Saul, MD, implemented an electronic medical record in 2004, he was simply looking for a system that would integrate with his practice management software.

He didn't consider how an EMR might change his work flow, for better or worse, or how it could generate revenue.

Luckily, Dr. Saul said, his implementation was successful. But he regrets not thinking ahead, as there are features he wishes he had but that his vendor doesn't offer.

Many physicians have had buyers' remorse over systems. Fear of such remorse is often listed as a major factor in doctors not buying health information technology.

At the recent Towards the Electronic Patient Record conference, technology vendors and other stakeholders discussed how to combat these fears and expand the use of health IT.

As has often been said, physicians need to analyze their practice work flow and how technology will affect it so they may become wiser buyers.

"Unless you know what you want, you will get what you deserve, which may not be what you need," said Bernd Wollschlaeger, MD, a physician consultant for the EHR Now! project of the Florida Academy of Family Physicians. The project is offering free EMRs to physicians through a contract with the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for Florida.

Vendors also acknowledged that they needed to make changes to make the decision easier for physicians.

[...]

Full text of AMNews content is available to AMA members and paid subscribers.

