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Most Wired Hospitals Connect Providers and Patients

CHICAGO (July 9, 2014) — As the nation's health care system transitions to more integrated and patient-centered care, hospitals are utilizing information technology to better connect disparate care providers, according to the 16th annual Health Care's Most Wired Survey, conducted by *Hospitals & Health Networks*.

For instance, 67 percent of Most Wired hospitals share critical patient information electronically with specialists and other care providers. Most Wired hospitals, those that meet a set of rigorous criteria across four operational categories, have made tremendous gains by using IT to reduce the likelihood of medical errors. Among Most Wired hospitals, 81 percent of medications are matched to the patient, nurse and order via bar code technology at the bedside.

"The Most Wired data show that shared health information allows clinicians and patients to have the information they need to promote health and make the most informed decisions about treatments," says Rich Umbdenstock, president and CEO of the American Hospital Association. "Hospitals, their clinicians and their communities are doing tremendous work to enhance their IT systems in ways that support care and delivery improvement, and patient engagement goals."

Among some of the key findings related to improving quality and patient safety:

- Nurses and physicians share best practices for patient safety and use checklists at more than 90 percent of Most Wired organizations.
- To help consumers make better decisions about their health care, standard measures of individual hospital quality performance are reported and publicly available. Nearly half of Most Wired organizations share this information on their websites and 86 percent provide quality scores to clinical leaders on a regular basis as part of their performance improvement initiatives.

"Hospital leaders should be commended for the hard work they've done under an unrealistic time frame," states Russell P. Branzell, president and CEO of the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives, referring to federal requirements that health care providers adopt and meaningfully use a certified electronic health records (EHR). "Still, there is a substantial amount of work ahead. Effective C-suites view IT adoption as a collaborative effort. They have a clear strategic plan and know how IT fits into that."

To that end, nearly all participants in the Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study have an established health IT project governance process and evaluate existing workflow processes and desired outcomes.

The 2014 Most Wired Survey also covered the evolution of new models and payment from the IT perspective. As health care delivery moves to a value-based system, it will require more and better use of data analytics, care coordination and population health management.

- 36 percent of Most Wired hospitals aggregate data from patient encounters to create a community health record.
- 71 percent of Most Wired hospitals manage care transitions compared with 57 percent of all responding organizations.
- 43 percent of Most Wired organizations integrate clinical and claims data so that they are accessible, searchable, and reportable across the care community

"As we talk about collecting data, one of the critical competencies is making sure you have views of the clinical and financial sides," says Rose Higgins, senior vice president and general manager, population and risk management at McKesson Technology Solutions. "You need both to be successful. Seeing them together will provide a better picture of what's happening at the population health level and will be important as hospitals take on more risk."

- 69 percent of Most Wired hospitals use tools for retrospective analysis of clinical and administrative data to identify areas for improving the quality of care and reducing the cost of care delivered.

"Healthcare professionals need to be free to communicate virtually across teams and to patients," says Tad Reynes, regional vice president, AT&T Business Solutions. "Providing tools to do so can potentially reduce costs, simplify workflows, improve patient care and offer a better experience to users."

- 35 percent of Most Wired hospitals use social media to deliver care management messages and 40 percent provide mobile applications for secure messaging with patients

Health Care's Most Wired Survey, conducted between Jan. 15 and March 15, asked hospitals and health systems nationwide to answer questions regarding their IT initiatives. Respondents completed 680 surveys, representing 1,900 hospitals, or more than 30 percent of all U.S. hospitals.

The July *H&HN* cover story detailing results is available at www.hhnmag.com.

About the AHA

The AHA is a nonprofit association of health care provider organizations and individuals that are committed to the health improvement of their communities. The AHA is the national advocate for its members, which includes nearly 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks, and other providers of care. Founded in 1898, the AHA provides education for health care leaders and is a source of information on health care issues and trends. For more information, visit the AHA website at www.aha.org.

About the Most Wired Survey

The 2014 Most Wired Survey is conducted in cooperation with McKesson Corp., AT&T, the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives, and the American Hospital Association.

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