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The way forward, part 3: Key advice when upgrading or deploying new technologies

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Done right, new technologies can alleviate administrative burdens for providers; done wrong – they may magnify them. Dr. Robert Budman, CMIO at Nuance, gives advice to organizations considering healthcare technology upgrades and deployments.

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Healthcare organizations continue to focus effort and attention on combating physician burnout to not only improve the health and wellbeing of providers, but also to have a positive impact on patient care, safety, satisfaction, and quality; physician retention and turnover; and organizational financial metrics. Organizations tackle some of these issues by implementing healthcare enabling technologies including speech recognition, computer-assisted physician documentation, and even voice-activated virtual assistants

These technologies have been designed and refined in ways that make documentation processes and working within the Electronic Health Record (EHR) more efficient and intuitive while promoting usability. Simply implementing new technologies, however, doesn't magically solve all the challenges an organization faces. Done right, new technologies can alleviate administrative burdens for providers; done wrong – they may magnify them.

Over my career, I have worked on and through many healthcare technology deployments, and while implementations vary in complexity and alterations in workflow, I can offer a few key pieces of advice to

providers and organizations based on this experience.

1. Take advantage of the training. Make it crisp and mandatory. In fact, double down on the training; good training will pay off, but bad training will cost you dearly and isn't good for patient care or providers. Focused, intensive "at-the-elbow" trainers can set up your providers for success.

2. Train to your organization and EHR workflow, rather than teaching providers how various buttons work. That means you'll want to train on all your tools, not just the EHR, or just the speech recognition, or just CAPD. Going back for multiple rounds of remedial or "salvage" training is costly and time-wasting.

3. Don't train to buttons or functions; train to end-to-end workflow excellence and expertise. Trust me – providers will be happier and more efficient. Then, when you've got your experts, rely on them to help train other providers. It works!

4. Use checklists and videos and short, high-value, frequent refreshers, especially when software is upgraded or expanded. Aim for the crisply targeted "need to knows" of your system. Break bad habits and close the training gaps as soon as discovered.

5. Open personalization "labs" or sessions to support providers in their specific use cases and create a sense of community among physicians. These environments will also reinforce the good habits and workflows of expertise and efficiency.

Recent research reveals that investments in technology training have a wide range of positive benefits from improved provider satisfaction to better patient care. After all, at the end of every digital healthcare interaction is what's most important: the patient.

Tags: Burnout, Dragon Medical One, Physician wellness

About Robert Budman, MD MBA

Dr. Robert Budman, MD, MBA, and Certified Documentation Improvement Practitioner (CDIP) with AHIMA, is the Chief Medical Information Officer for Nuance Healthcare. He supports the Computer Assisted Physician Documentation (CAPD) product line and develops training and education materials for outbound and internal use. Dr. Budman is Board Certified in Family Med & Informatics. He focuses on efficiency, safety, and quality initiatives with global experience in multi-EHR and service line care delivery. His work involves implementation, workflow adoption, and optimization. Dr. Budman earned multiple clinical awards and speaks extensively on healthcare IT.

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