



# Technology Solutions Update

1st Quarter 2005

## Office Efficiency Rates High in Recent Technology Solutions Survey

MMIC Technology Solutions recently conducted a survey of MMIC policyholders in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin to identify their technology-related business needs. The survey was distributed in an issue of the Technology Solutions newsletter, *Update*.

From a list of 20 issues affecting health care providers, survey participants rated office efficiency (48 percent), labor costs (41 percent), under coding (41 percent) and chart storage (36 percent) as some of the key issues facing their practices.

The survey also asked participants to identify their information technology priorities. Overall, the top products and services that practices recognized as a priority are:

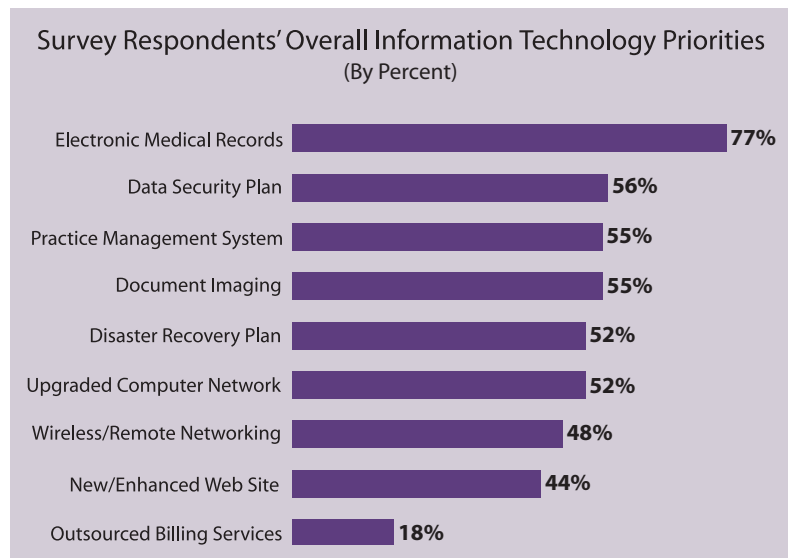
- Electronic medical records (77 percent),
- Data security planning (56 percent),
- Practice management systems (55 percent) and
- Document imaging (55 percent).

The leading short-term priorities identified as likely to be addressed by their practices within six months included:

- Security planning (35 percent),
- Disaster recovery planning (24 percent) and
- Computer networking (23 percent).

Long-term priorities, those to be considered a year or more in the future, included:

- Electronic medical records (32 percent),
- Document imaging (25 percent) and
- Wireless/remote networking (25 percent).



Technology Solutions thanks everyone who participated in the survey.

### Key Issues Facing Practices (By Percentage of Respondents)

Office Efficiency.....	48%	Compliance.....	25%
Labor Costs.....	41%	Office Space.....	24%
Under Coding.....	41%	Preventive Care Reminders.....	23%
Chart Storage.....	36%	Prescription Refills.....	22%
Cash Flow.....	35%	Patient Scheduling.....	19%
Transcription.....	35%	Internal Communications.....	16%
Billing Efficiency.....	30%	Chart Legibility.....	15%
Chart Accessibility.....	32%	Network Security.....	15%
Provider Productivity.....	31%	Network Performance.....	8%
Lost Revenue.....	30%	Drug/Product Recalls.....	4%

## Electronic Medical Records Improve Patient Charting



In a traditional paper-based physician practice, staff records patient medical information in paper charts. For many clinics, the charting process may be repeated 40 or 50 times a day. Over time, all those charts add up and working with them can be time-consuming and expensive. Staff may spend significant time searching for missing or misfiled

charts and deciphering handwritten notes included in charts.

Electronic medical records (EMR) help clinics reduce the costs and streamline processes associated with maintaining patient records, according to a 2003 paper published by the *Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association* (JAMIA). With EMR, staff members can access charts easily during patient visits or telephone calls from remote clinic locations or when the charts are in use by other staff members. Also, because patient information is typed into the medical record, documentation is more legible.

However, *JAMIA* and other recent research says EMRs provide efficiencies beyond improvements in documenting patient charts:

- Entering patient information directly into the medical record reduces or eliminates transcription costs.
- Writing prescriptions becomes safer because the EMR can alert the physician to a patient's drug allergy or drug interactions that may occur with a previously prescribed drug.
- Coding-improves because the EMR suggests appropriate codes based upon the documentation, which improves reimbursement.

Physicians may also notice an increase in free time at the end of the day when they switch from paper-based charting to an EMR. Because information is entered into the chart at the time of the patient visit, charts are completed and signed off on by the time the physician heads out the door.

To learn more about electronic medical records call MMIC Technology Solutions, 1-800-328-5532, or e-mail [TechnologySales@mmihc.com](mailto:TechnologySales@mmihc.com).

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## NextGen EMR and EPM Win Awards at HIMSS Conference

MMIC Technology Solutions is the Midwest reseller of the NextGen Electronic Medical Records (EMR) and the Electronic Practice Management (EPM). Both systems recently received top honors at the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) conference this past February in Dallas, Texas.

The NextGen EMR was one of four systems to share the first place MS-HUG award in the Ambulatory Care: Clinical/Patient Information Systems Category. NextGen EPM won the first place MS-HUG award in the

Administrative/Financial Systems category. Award applicants are evaluated on the extent to which they provide significant business benefits to health care organizations and improve patient care. Microsoft Healthcare Users Group and the HIMSS co-sponsored the MS-HUG awards.