



1st National Nursing Informatics Conference 2005 Proceedings

Nurses & Informatics: Transforming Healthcare

Sept 14 – 16th, 2005 – University of Toronto, Ontario

POSTER THEME: Nursing Informatics Innovations in Practice

Development of an Organizational Readiness Scale for eHealth (information technology/information systems) Innovation: A Multi-site Approach

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ABSTRACT

E-health can be defined as the use of information technologies to deliver or enhance health information and health services. In a broader sense it also refers to a way of thinking globally about health information and a commitment to improve health care using information and communication technology. Timely access to valid health information has become a priority for managers, health professionals and patients hence the proliferation of e-health initiatives such as web based expert knowledge systems, electronic health records and decision support systems. However, the failure rate for information technology in health care organizations is high and costly, and despite the recognized benefits of e-health innovations, successful integration into current practice settings remains a challenge.

Studies in the area of health informatics have explored barriers and facilitators that influence the adoption of e-health innovations. Organizational readiness to adopt innovation has been associated with structural (organizational size, centralization, intersystem dependency, age) and nonstructural (organization and staff values, adequate resources and support for professional activities) attributes. To date limited research has been done to define and measure e-health readiness in Canadian health care organizations. This paper will present the multi-site, multi-method process used to develop and test an organizational readiness scale for e-health. A review of relevant literature related to organization readiness will also be presented.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Janet Curran is a Clinical Researcher at the IWK Health Centre. She is a PhD candidate in Interdisciplinary Studies at Dalhousie University and is the recipient of a CIHR Child Health Clinician Scientist Training Award. Janet teaches Health Informatics in the School of Nursing at Dalhousie University and her research is focused on the development of a knowledge translation model for rural and urban Emergency Practitioners.