2nd National Nursing Informatics Conference 2007 Proceedings
Informatics Everywhere: Celebrating the Diversity of Informatics Practice
October 1 -3, 2007 – Holiday Inn on King, Toronto, Ontario

THEME: The IT – EHR Challenge

Building Capacity for Success: Strategies for Introducing Technology in Healthcare

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Abstract

Healthcare organizations are coming under increasing pressure to improve the quality and efficiency of service delivery. Communication technology integrates well with work practices in other industries. However, studies indicate the adoption of technology has been slow to evolve with healthcare workers and many technology implementations have ended in failure.

This study explored the factors influencing a nurse's decision to adopt or reject innovative communication technology. The findings indicate social and organizational factors are the most significant determinants in the introduction of technology. In this case, a power imbalance in the political structures of the organization contributed to the users' perception of powerlessness, isolation and ethical distress. As a result, there was poor integration of the technology into nurses' work practices. This indicates a deficiency in the skill set of leadership at local and organizational levels in effectively managing the change process. Broadening our understanding of the factors influencing technology adoption and change management in the healthcare environment will assist in preparing organizational leaders to be better equipped for future technology implementations. The aim of this presentation is to discuss the factors influencing a nurses' decision to adopt technology, and present recommendations for a disciplined and structured approach to change management. An evaluation framework for technology adoption will also be presented.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Suzanne Craig is an Adjunct Professor in the School of Nursing at University of British Columbia and is an appointed member of the Finance and Audit Committee of the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia. She holds a BSN from the University of Victoria, a Six Sigma Black Belt and is a PhD candidate at Central Queensland University in Australia. Suzanne is involved in operational and strategic planning, business transformation, and technology implementations in healthcare. Most recently, she has been working with Cancer Care Ontario implementing the Enterprise Master Patient Index and Wait Times Information System across Ontario.