

Electronic Health Record Association Publishes EHR Implementation Guide for CDC Opioid Guideline

New resource will aid healthcare organizations wishing to incorporate opioid clinical decision support tool into clinicians' electronic health record workflow

(Chicago, November 29, 2018) The Electronic Health Record Association (EHRA) today published the [CDC Opioid Guideline – Implementation Guide for Electronic Health Records](#).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published the [CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain](#) in 2016, noting that, “using guidelines to address problematic prescribing has the potential to optimize care and improve patient safety based on evidence-based practice, as well as reverse the cycle of opioid pain medication misuse that contributes to the opioid overdose epidemic.” The CDC Guideline’s 12 recommendations for prescribing opioids for chronic pain (outside of active cancer, palliative, sickle cell disease and end-of-life care) apply primarily to physician, physician assistant, and advanced practice nurse prescribers of opioids who are making treatment decisions.

Although the CDC Guideline is often cited by care professionals who treat pain, it is seldom and inconsistently utilized in clinical practice. One reason often mentioned to explain low adoption of opioid-related clinical decision support tools, like the CDC Guideline, is the lack of content available within a provider’s EHR workflow.

The *CDC Opioid Guideline – Implementation Guide for Electronic Health Records* was created by volunteer members of the EHR Association Opioid Crisis Task Force, who focused on how clinical practice guidelines can be efficiently and effectively operationalized within the EHR to improve opioid stewardship in clinical practice.

“It is clear from conversations we had with medical and public health professionals over the last year that the general availability of content, such as that published by the CDC, is not enough,” said Task Force chair Leigh Burchell. “It needs to be presented to prescribers, in large hospitals and small physician practices alike, as they make care decisions. This implementation guide will be of value to both technology vendors and provider organizations who are focused on delivering clinical best practices to physicians and other prescribers—at the point of care, within the EHR workflow.”

In this implementation guide, the EHR Association provides insights on the role technology can play in operationalizing each of the 12 CDC recommendations, as well as a menu of specific proposals for implementing these solutions, noting that they should be tailored to each provider organization’s practice, protocols, and state laws.

At today’s [annual meeting](#) of the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) in Washington DC, Burchell will share the new EHRA implementation guide during the afternoon breakout session, “Improving Opioid Prescribing through Electronic Clinical Decision Support Tools.”

The Association’s Opioid Crisis Task Force was formed in early 2018 to research and provide recommendations on new ways EHR technology can contribute solutions to help solve the complex puzzle of the opioid crisis. Its first task was compiling a robust collection of [state-by-state data](#) on how Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMP) and electronic prescribing of controlled substances (EPCS) are currently being utilized in the fight against prescription medication abuse and identifying gaps and inconsistencies across states. The Task Force found that currently no state or

U.S. territory can comprehensively see every place and time a patient has filled opioid prescriptions. An [infographic](#) highlights other key findings.

“When the EHRA Opioid Crisis Task Force began its work, we oriented our effort around the premise that powerful information and technology tools like EHRs, PDMPs, EPCS, CDS, and health data exchange hold very real potential to measurably assist in addressing substance misuse,” said Burchell. “In helping our clients deliver the best and most informed care possible, we must collectively maximize all the tools at our disposal.”

To access the EHR Association *CDC Opioid Guideline – Implementation Guide for Electronic Health Records*, [click here](#), or visit www.ehra.org.

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About the EHR Association

Established in 2004, the Electronic Health Record Association (EHRA) brings together companies that develop, market, and support electronic health records (EHRs), to collaborate on issues that impact our businesses and our collective customers — hospitals and providers that represent the majority of EHR users in the US. We work together to speak with a unified voice on these topics in a non-competitive, collegial effort to understand, educate, and collaborate with all stakeholders engaged with EHRs and health information technology.

EHRA operates on the premise that the rapid, widespread adoption of EHRs is essential to improve the quality of patient care, as well as the productivity and sustainability of the healthcare system as a key enabler of healthcare transformation.

The EHR Association and its members are committed to supporting safe healthcare delivery, fostering continued innovation, and operating with high integrity in the market for our users and their patients and families.

For more information, please visit www.ehra.org.

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