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LSMS/LSU Joint Study Details Lack of EMR Adoption by Louisiana Physicians

(Source: [LSU Office of Communications & University Relations](#))

BATON ROUGE, La., Nov. 9 -- Louisiana State University issued the following news release:

One of the most significant challenges facing physicians today is the adoption, or lack thereof, of Electronic Medical Record, or EMR, technology.

Despite potential incentives and penalties as dictated by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, or ARRA, which are dependent on a physician's willingness to use EMR technology, the medical community is still hesitant to adopt EMRs, according to a newly published study by Andrew Schwarz and Colleen Schwarz, professors at LSU's E. J. Ourso College of Business and the Center for Computation and Technology. The report, a joint study between the Louisiana State Medical Society and LSU, is titled "Findings on the Non-Adoption of EMR Technology Among Physicians in Louisiana."

"There are a unique set of factors that explain why someone chooses to not adopt a technology that do not explain why they do," said Andrew Schwarz.

"In our review of the current discourse over EMR, we saw an alarming trend - an attempt to blame the doctors. In our research, we call this 'pro-innovation bias' - blaming the individual not adopting the technology instead of taking a critical view of the technology itself. We wanted to uncover what was really going on with EMR from the perspective of the doctor, with our approach being physician-centric.

"We were often asked why two business professors would be interested in understanding the issues confronting the medical community," Schwarz added. "We are interested because this represents an interesting business case. In the case of the medical community, we have a marketplace where the consumers of the EMR technology (i.e. the physicians) have little to no control over their pricing structure and are being forced to adopt a technology from vendors operating in a free market."

In phase one of the study, the researchers conducted 15 face-to-face interviews with physicians across the state who had not adopted an EMR. They also interviewed four other physicians who were either users of EMRs or experts on the matter. From those interviews, they came up with 31 factors that were cited as reasons for the non-adoption of EMR technology.

Those led to phase two of the study, which was the development and distribution of a web-based survey that went to 3,324 members of the Louisiana State Medical Society. Twenty-one members opted out of the survey, leaving a sample population of 3,303 physicians. Eight hundred and sixty-six doctors began the survey, a 26.2 percent response rate, with 594 finishing for a 68.5 percent completion rate. Those 594 physicians were made up of practicing physicians, retired physicians and medical students/residents from across the state and representing a variety of specialties. Seventy-eight percent of the subjects were male, and 22 percent were female. Racial diversity was also achieved with 78 percent of the respondents being white, 2.5 percent were African-American, 2.5 percent were Asian, 2 percent were Hispanic and the remainder indicated "other."

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