**Discussion 10**

**Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA) and Meaningful Use**

**Post  a response that analyzes how policy mandates and requirements you experience might affect the issues you encounter as a practicing nurse informaticist. Be specific and provide examples. Next, analyze how evolving policies that may be implemented might affect issues you encounter in nursing practice, and explain why.**

Nursing informatics is a new specialty in the nursing profession. Nurse Informaticists might have to face many challenges during their practice such as issues while designing and implementing nursing information systems, freedom of use and security of information, preparing nursing workflows to overcome challenges, effective communication, and low number of NI staff. (Asiri, 2016)

Policies are an important part of Nursing informatics, and they establish the structure of electronic health systems. Government regulatory bodies initiate policies to ease the execution of electronic health record implementation and regulate the system to preserve the rights of our patients and health care providers. My organization has a policy of Interoperability where patients, healthcare providers, and hospitals, can exchange health information and be able to use that information for informed decision-making about care delivery.

There is a profound transformation in our healthcare industry mainly in the information technology site that has challenged the organization, policymakers, Nurse informaticists, and stakeholders. Unable to achieve interoperability of technology and health information can present challenges to Nurse informaticists and one of the challenges I would like to discuss is the wrong choice of software that will bring challenges to interoperability. According to Altexsoft, not a proper choice of software is the most important challenge among all, and I completely agree with that because when the software used does not integrate with other solutions, when there are Insecure ports and protocols, it can lead to a lack or delay of information exchange, cyberattacks with the possibility of leaking valuable patient information. Companies that adopt a solution that relies on insecure protocols to communicate with other software may weaken their security posture.

Information blocking will occur when something prevents access to electronic health information (EHI), its use, and exchange. This includes restrictions enforced by organization policies, limiting technological measures, or cases when a healthcare provider simply refuses to provide necessary data.  Informatic systems are not always interoperable with other electronic health systems and if there is inadequate support by administration can be an obstacle in the line of Nurse Informatics.

This policy can affect Nurses as there is no EHR transformation from one system to another. As a result, Nurses and providers may have to wait for essential information on a patient’s health or be left in the dark about previous treatment that a patient received at another facility. I work in a neurocritical unit where we say, “Time is Brain”. If we act fast, we can save someone’s life or prevent devastating injury. We get stroke patients all the time and we must administer TPA within 4 and ½ hours and take the patient to Interventional radiology within 24 hours, if it takes time to get this information from outside the hospital it can result in terrible consequences. Therefore, Nurses and Providers should have an overall understanding of the system behind health informatics and be able to advocate for change. Nurses can utilize this information to optimize the use of health informatics and campaign for safe, effective, and efficient health information technology. (Katherine, 2018)

**References:**

AltexSoft. (2020, July 9). How to comply with New Healthcare Interoperability Rules. AltexSoft. https://www.altexsoft.com/blog/healthcare-interoperability-rules/

Asiri, H. (2016). An overview of Nursing Informatics (NI) as a profession: How we evolved ... https://www.scitepress.org/papers/2016/56582/56582.pdf

Katherine, B. (2018). Public policy and Health Informatics. Seminars in oncology nursing. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29628200/

**Response 1**

Hello, Dr Moyers,

Any kind of practice that is likely to prevent, discourage, and inhibit the access, exchange, or use of Electronic Health Information is called Information blocking.  (West, 2021) Information blocking can be practices that make it difficult or impossible for patients to access their electronic health records as these are the actions by healthcare providers to prevent or obstruct access to his or her medical records by other treating providers.

Information blocking can occur due to various reasons such as poor EHI system design or a healthcare worker refusing to release information. To prevent harm and protect patient privacy, healthcare providers can limit access to healthcare information. This can also be done to protect the security of healthcare information. Healthcare information workers can limit access to healthcare information if needed to perform IT maintenance. (Jantz, 2022). There are eight exceptions that allow healthcare providers to block access to health information and they will not be penalized for that, these include Preventing Harm Exception, Privacy Exception, Security Exception, Infeasibility Exception, Health Information Technology Performance Exception, Licensing Exception, Fees Exception, Content and Manner Exception (West, 2021)

**References:**

Jantz, J. (2022, November 28). What is information blocking? an overview for Health Information Profe. Rasmussen University. https://www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/health-sciences/blog/what-is-information-blocking/

West, K. J. (2021, August 10). The new information blocking rule: What it means for healthcare providers. https://parsonsbehle.com/insights/new-information-blocking-rule-what-it-means-for-healthcare-providers

**Response2:**

Hello Dr Moyers,

 Thank you for the question

Nurse Informaticists play an important role in public policy and regulations and establish the structure of electronic health systems therefore they should have an overall understanding of the system behind informatics and be able to advocate for change (Katherine, 2018)

One of the functional areas of Nursing informatics is Policymakers which makes them a part of policy implementation/changes. I completely agree with the article from Carlow University that Being an advocate for hospital units, patients Nurses, and the institution as a whole NI help shape policies and standards at the state, national, and organizational level to provide evidence-based and patient-centered care, improve human health and advance medical research.

**References:**

Katherine, B. (2018, May). Public policy and Health Informatics. Seminars in oncology nursing. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29628200/

What is the role of Nursing Informatics: Carlow Online. Carlow University. (2022, August 5). https://online.carlow.edu/resources/article/role-of-nursing-informatics/#:~:text=Nursing%20informatics%20allows%20nurses%20to,health%20and%20advance%20medical%20research.