A Special Thanks...

Georgia Rural Health Association

HOMETOWN HEALTH

South Carolina Office of Rural Health
About the Rural Health IT Survey

**Objective:** Gather insights into how rural practices and hospitals use technology, the challenges they face, and their goals going into 2019 and beyond.

3rd biennial survey

Data collected August through December 2018.

Distributed to stakeholders across rural practices and hospitals in the United States.
Respondent Demographics

- Hospitals: 58.5%
- Clinics: 35.7%
- Other: 5.8%

- 6-10 Providers: 29.2%
- 11-50 Providers: 11.2%
- 51+ Providers: 5%
- 1 Provider: 5%
- 2-5 Providers: 24.8%
Respondent Demographics

- **Office Managers/Administrators**: 32.5%
- **Front Office Staff/Reception**: 28%
- **Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant**: 11.2%
- **Billing/Back Office**: 10.1%
- **Physician**: 9.1%
- **Management**: 6.7%
Key Findings and Data Analysis
5 Year Plans

- Grow the practice by adding staff and increasing patient base
- Remain the same
- Affiliate with an ACO
- Other
- Affiliate with a hospital provider-based clinic to a PCMH
- Convert the practice or provider-based clinic to a RHC
Desire to Grow is on the Rise
Financial Growth

“Find ways to increase revenue while cutting costs.”

“Expand our service lines by adding additional providers and locations.”

“Build new hospital/clinic.”
Patient Experience Growth

“Improve patient education and engagement.”

“Expand telemedicine and outpatient services.”
Top Challenges Organizations Face

- Declining reimbursements
- Understaffed/difficulty finding & retaining qualified staff
- Improving billing processes & managing denials
- Maintaining/upgrading IT
- Improving patient engagement
- Staying up-to-date with industry changes and understanding the effect
- Increasing/retaining patient base/marketing & promoting practice
- Increasing regulatory oversight
- Other (please specify)
- Consolidation and buy-outs
Technology Use Today

- EHR - Electronic Health Record (Charting and Practice Management)
- Patient Portal
- EMR - Electronic Medical Record (Charting Only)
- Telehealth/Telemedicine
- PM - Practice Management (Scheduling and Billing Only)
- Mobile Apps on Smartphones/Tablets/iPads
- Case Management and/or Care Coordination Tools
- Population Health Management Tools/Analytics
- Patient Responsibility Estimation Tools
- Currently not using any electronic systems (i.e. rely on paper charting or proprietary system)
Technology Wish List

- Mobile Apps on Smartphones and Tablets/IPads
- Patient Marketing Tools
- Population Health Management Tools / Analytics
- Telehealth/Telemedicine
- Case Management and/or Care Coordination Tools
- Electronic Health Record (EHR) / Electronic Medical Record (EMR)
- Patient Responsibility Estimation Tools
- Patient Portal
- Practice Management (PM) (scheduling and billing only)
Wish List: Mobile (30%)

95% Americans with a cell phone
73% Patients who would like to communicate via text
10% Increase of patient satisfaction
Wish List: Patient Engagement

- Telehealth: 28%
- Pop Health: 28%
- Patient Marketing Tools: 28%
- Patient Responsibility Estimator: 25%
- Patient Portal: 21%
Deep Dive: Telehealth

- We are not interested in offering telehealth: 28%
- We are currently looking into offering telehealth: 23%
- About once a week: 8%
- A few times a week: 12%
- About once a month: 11%
- A few times a month: 11%
- Daily: 7%
Barriers to Telehealth

41% 38% 38%

Patient Utilization Costs to Implement Provider Buy-In
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Critical Items When Considering Health IT

- Enhanced Functionality: 18%
- Ease of Use/User Interface: 12%
- Other: 13%
- Improved Support and Training: 8%
- Assistance Meeting Govt. Programs: 7%
- Cost: 42%
Top Factors Impeding Tech Investments

Other notable barriers to tech adoption/upgrades:
- Too many options
- Fear of change
- Connectivity/network challenges
Wish List: Services

- Credentialing
- Patient Collections
- Quality Reporting/EHR Incentive Program Assistance/Consulting
- IT Support
- Coding
- Transcription
- Revenue Cycle Management
- Pre-Authorization
- Chronic Care Management or Care Coordination
- Population Health Solutions
- Practice Management and/or Hospital Administration
Reasons to Outsource Revenue Cycle

- Seeking Higher Reimbursement
- Improve Office Efficiency
- Using a Service with Experienced and/or Certified Professionals
- Reduce Staffing and/or Training Costs
- Lack of Reliable or Compliant In-House Resources
Quality Reporting Programs

Nearly half of all rural providers are participating in value-based payment program.
Involvement in Quality Reporting Programs

- Other (please specify)
- Quality Payment Program (QPP) - Advanced Alternative Payment Model (APM) track
- None
- Inpatient Quality Reporting (IQR)
- Chronic Care Management (CCM)
- Quality Payment Program (QPP) - Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) track
- Medicare & Medicaid EHR Incentive Program (Meaningful Use/Promoting Interoperability)
Barriers to Participation

- Do not see the benefit in participating in quality programs
- Current system does not support documentation of metrics/data for quality reporting programs
- Unsure which programs are available/fit my practice
- Not enough resources or training available to my staff/practice
Preparing for Quality Payments Program

Our current system/vendors guides us through QPP best practices, tracks the necessary metrics, processes the data, and generates reports.

- Reallocated current staff/hired additional staff to handle the collection, processing, and reporting of necessary metrics
- Utilize 3rd party dashboard to track metrics, process the data and/or generate reports
- Hired a consultant to guide us through QPP and best practices
Thinking Big and Acting Small

**Mobile:**
Apps rank #1 on technology wish lists

Ranks lowest of critical factors when evaluating new technology

**Costs:**
Top factor hindering tech investments and in consideration

Second on list to barrier to telehealth investment

**Telehealth:**
10% increase in weekly usage since 2017 survey

12% decrease in interest for telehealth solution

**Population Health:**
Tied for 2nd on technology wishlist

1 out of 5 rural hospitals/clinics don’t understand the benefits
Positive Impact of Health IT Investments

- 6.72%
- 47.06%
- 46.22%

Yes. It has improved clinical workflow, simplified scheduling, and/or helped improve/stabilize billing & collections.

Somewhat. Takes more time and resources than we anticipated, and we’re not sure of its impact.

No. It was too much effort to find and implement a system that fit our workflow and benefit our practice.
Want more?

azaleahealth.com/ruralhitwebinar/

- On Demand Webinar & today’s slides
- 14-page White Paper
- Strategies for Success ebook
- Prior Studies