IntakeQ

Checklist: How to Select the Right EHR Vendor

This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:
[Are electronic healthcare records already outdated?](#)

Choosing the right EHR vendor is key to making the most out of the technology available to you. Here are a few things to do to ensure that you have a vendor or software solution that meets your needs.

1. Identify high-priority needs

What EHR features do you absolutely need and which features can you live without? Make sure you know which features you will need to achieve meaningful use.

2. Set EHR goals

Follow the "SMART" goals process. Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound.

3. Decide on your deal-breakers

Make a list of potential deal-breakers. Will your vendor give you access to your data as needed? What are the ongoing costs? What other benefits can they offer you?

4. Narrow the field

If you're not sure where to look for EHR vendors, you can start with the Certified HIT Product List (CHPL)Web Site Disclaimers which gives a comprehensive listing of certified EHRs and EHR modules.
You can also:

- Ask colleagues about their EHR experiences
- Contact any medical societies you are a member of to ask for EHR evaluation tools and resources
- Find information about different vendors through online research and reviews Make a list of your top 3-5 choices.

5. Compare vendors

To compare and evaluate RFIs returned by vendors, use something like the Vendor Evaluation Matrix Tool to rate the basic functionalities, the Vendor Meaningful Use Compare Tool to rate the meaningful use capabilities, and the Vendor Pricing Template compare the costs of different EHRs.

6. Conduct workflow studies

Once you have an idea of the vendor you want to work with, it's important to do a workflow study of their software. EHRs should accommodate clinic workflows rather than forcing physicians and staff to adapt to the EHR's templates and structure.

7. Examine infrastructure

You also want to look closely at their technical infrastructure. Factors like the computer's processing speed (hardware), Internet connection, broadband width, even battery life can contribute to poor EHR performance. Make sure that their technology will remain updated and up to speed with IT's changing landscape for many years to come.