Is Online Personal Health Information Reliable And Safe Now?

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In the era of technology, people tend to embrace ICT in accessing and storing information. Even though such an instance presents some advantages, various disadvantages also exist, making it an uphill task to promote effectiveness. The question that most individuals in different parts of the world as themselves is whether online personal health information is reliable and safe. The justification for this question relies on the various case studies conducted in multiple hospitals in different parts of the world.

It stands out that the use of the internet in searching for health as well as medical information is helpful in making informed health decisions. Ideally, that should never substitute the doctor since certain conditions are exceptional and require close medical attention. Another justification why the help of the doctor is critical is the rise in cyber quackery, which plays a vital role in the spread of fake information. Every user of the internet should have skills in differentiating between fake and genuine sites. Currently, online personal health information is not adequately protected because most privacy policies of PHR systems fail to offer an in-depth description of the security measures that they use, due to their compliance with standards and regulations being low, leading to many errors. This essay will justify the fact that personal health information online is not safe and reliable. It is, therefore, necessary to take the right measures into consideration to thwart any risk that can arise in the process.

Why Patients Seek Health Information Online

According to the 2010 Nielsen study, it is evident that most people currently make good use of the internet in searching for information and that related to health as well as medical conditions is among the top in the list. Access to this online information arises due to a number of reasons. First, it is evident that individuals strive to gather more information related to the diagnosed condition (Rennis, McNamara, Seidel & Shneyderman, 2015). That helps in creating more awareness. It is well known that not everyone can make a perfect and the use of the online platform makes it possible to find alternative ways of treating a given condition. In certain instances, doctors might provide options that are not within scope. Patients across the world strive to get a second option online, and that is the main reason for the extensive use of the internet to search for medical and health-related information. It is imperative to limit the level of literacy in various parts of the world to make the search effective. Patients should know how to traverse through the pages and get the very best out of

it. That will also play a crucial role in limiting the aspect of resistance, which is normally one of the biggest challenges while dealing with technology. The developers also have a role to play (Wyatt, 2017). For instance, there is a need to make the user of the system friendly to thwart the same level of resistance. That will also make it possible to address the needs of the end users. Certain systems can only benefit a given group of people, and that makes it unsuitable in certain regions, which limits knowledge scope.

Peer Support and Online Health Communities

Support is also an important part of health since it gives a sense of fulfillment and makes it possible for individuals to heal fast. With the help of internet searches, patients get the opportunity to share with others and get all the emotional support that they need. Some of the common platforms that provide such assistance include chat rooms, Facebook, and blogs among other communication platforms. Through the various communication platforms, patients get the opportunity to resolve conflicting information. That clarifies the medical issue and makes it possible to improve on some health-related aspects. People will feel accepted once they get the opportunity to interact and relate to others. Space itself enables them to learn that they are not alone in the journey and will borrow from those with the same problem (Wyatt, 2017). The instance is helpful in informing as well as motivating patients across the world. It is the role of the government as well as other stakeholders to ensure effectiveness in service delivery to improve well-being.

Supplementing Rather Than Replacing Medical Advice

A study conducted in Australia indicated that close to a quarter of the population normally seek health-related information online. Ideally, such a figure arises due to the high literacy levels as well as the spread of the Internet in most parts of the region. People find it possible to discuss and share health and medical-related information. The usage is expected to increase since individuals currently use the internet to supplement the information that they get from their doctors (Marcotte, Kirtane, Lynn & McKethan, 2015). Even though that is the case in the region, it is not right to thwart all the doctor’s advice since some of the information presented on the internet can also mislead resulting in inappropriate treatment processes. Ideally, health is such a complicated aspect that requires users to use relevant information during treatment to avoid complicating their lives.

Background

Efficiency, as well as effectiveness, are key instances that arise due to the use of online personal health information. Patients across the world can easily email their providers. That merely requires an internet connection. With globalization in modern society, health providers can originate from every

part of the world. Initially, people used to travel for miles to access such practitioners. That can be sorted with just a button due to the advancement in technology. The doctor, in turn, is capable of providing perception in case the same never happened in the initial stages. The patient also gets the opportunity to request a prescription refill. In normal circumstances, the patient must be present to get the results of any treatment. That is never the case with the advancement in technology since the provider can email the same test results to the patients. The patient must first send the requested sample to the doctor, which can follow whichever means. On other occasions, it is also possible to conduct all the necessary tests in the nearby laboratory and simply send the result to the provider. Most providers will always send the test results along with a reminder regarding preventive services. That is helpful in controlling various ailments in contemporary society.

The main cause of resistance in the previous case related to lack of communication in most healthcare premises. It is evident that the use of PHRs contributes greatly to patient empowerment as well as contentment. The level of patient literacy is also on the increase in matters related to medication. It is possible to explain the existing subscription and follow up at the right time. That reduces the chances of drug abuse. Some people might think that drug abuse only entails the consumption of illegal drugs, not subscribed by the doctor. However, taking prescribed drugs in a manner not advised by the doctor is also part of the abuse and can affect the health of patients in different parts of the world. It is also argued that the use of PHP is the main reason for better patient-provider communication, which is the main reason for the success in most premises. In a nutshell, all the improvements not only provide comprehensive care but also embrace the aspect of patient safety. These aspects are vital in improving the quality of healthcare services rendered in different parts of the world. It is feasible to enhance the relationship between the provider and the patients should the platform reinforce critical aspects of communication. Patients are likely to neglect their duties once they fail to get the right direction on matters related to their medication. Such an instance significantly compromises their health since they are likely to engage in drug abuse. Any situation that will improve such communication is vital and makes it possible to meet the needs of such clients as well as those of the public.

Opposing Arguments

People across the globe will always have an opposing argument on matters related to the thesis statement of this particular research. In the first instance, a doctor still records all the information pertaining to a patient, and that proves time-consuming on most occasions. In the past decade, the use of manual records was evident in which doctors had to document all the patient’s information and store it safely on shelves. Can you imagine what might transpire when the patient visits another doctor? Ideally, the process called for the need to start fresh and record all the information. That is never the case with the advancement in technology in which existing medical records are available. The doctor has to share the information with other users. Again, the patient is better placed to access the personal information since the account belongs to them. Such patients get the opportunity to seek medical attention in nearly every part of the world and also save time during such processes.

Apart from the storage aspect, there is also the easy access that comes as a result of PHPs. It is evident that the account belongs to the patient and he or she can always log in and obtain the relevant information in such an instance. The step will also make it possible to access health care services in other regions as well. The provider can also get in touch with the patient on a regular basis. That is the surest way to update on critical matters such as prescriptions. Even though providers might be busy at times, online communications are simple since they do not require much traveling as well as time. Contacting the provider at any given time is possible. That is contrary to the previous periods in which it was mandatory to access providers at the specified time.

Empowerment and effective communication are vital parts of healthcare provision. The use of PHP makes it possible to empower clients in that they will always get all that they need and can also keep track of critical demands in the sector. Communication is also more straightforward due to the minimal time required, as well as the ability to comment at any given time of day. The aspect of the disclosure is possible due to the extensive use of the internet in various parts of the world. In any given instance, it is imperative to ensure that patients get all the information that they might require to have a positive impact on their health. That stands as the best approach to creating a just society and improving the living standard as well as the health of individuals.

Supporting Arguments

In any case, there must be advantages as well as disadvantages of any cause. However, it is imperative to take a stand based on the point of focus. For the essay, the focus was on the safety as well as the reliability of health records online. It was posited that such an online platform makes it possible to share and learn from one another. That was the reason for the emergence of the communication platform. However, it is evident that only those with compromised health are likely to share their information. Those with good health will always avoid the platform. Ideally, that indicates a lack of diversity while addressing the main aspect of health. Even though experience on a matter is key, it is also imperative to bank on knowledge in communicating critical instances of any research. The use of PHR, therefore, stands as an ineffective platform in health care, and its utilization should not be the case on most occasions.

Online platforms face some limitations due to the security concerns involved. According to the survey conducted on Americans, it is evident that most of the population is sensitive and is not likely to share much of their information online. The main reason is the fact that some of them don’t trust the security platforms that exist. They find it hard to relate to others on an online platform (Lin, Zhang, Song & Omori, 2016). In most instances, such individuals are concerned with the manner in which other stakeholders with use the information. The ability to secure insurance is a factor to consider in most cases, and Americans have the feeling that sharing such information can put them at a crossroads and limit their chances of securing insurance or credit. Moreover, it might also be a limiting factor in finding job opportunities. Nevertheless, individuals in various parts of the world still find it ideal to use the online platform is storing as well as accessing patient-related information. Even

though different security concerns emerge, it is imperative to outline that those with a college education are likely to see the positive part of the system. However, risks are also well documented, and the most critical factor to consider, in most cases, is data safety. Most systems fail due to the inability to have the most effective programs in place that will reinforce security during access and dissemination of information.

Even though the use of logical aspects of protecting the system has been in operation, it is still an uphill task to achieve effectiveness a d c g? and individuals across the world are trying to find better ways of protecting the system to improve confidentiality as well as integrity. It stands out that there is the possibility of hacking a PHR. That can interfere with the patient's data in some ways (Lin, Zhang, Song & Omori, 2016). For instance, it is possible to modify such data, and that can compromise the nature of healthcare services rendered in that particular instance. The physician should always have a deeper understanding of the existing information before making the final judgment. In such cases, the altered data can result in the prescription of incorrect medication, which indeed will affect the quality of life. The implementation of the system will always come with some risks, and it is imperative to understand all the possibilities of making the system secure. Most developed countries have the technical know-how to make security a reality, but developing nations still lag behind. That relates to matters of computer security, and I always find it hard to implement some of the security concerns. That brings the need to normalize operations related to online health records. Ideally, there is a need to give the patient the opportunity to make a choice before presenting their information online.

Counter Arguments

It is well known that technology is taking a different paradigm in modern society and influences the manner in which individuals conduct business in various parts of the world. The limitations are evident as well as the advantages (Morris & Roberto, 2016). The ability to enlighten the community on the best protective measures while operating online should be the first approach in the implementation of the system. It is not proper to address the benefits that accrue due to the use of such a system before having an understanding of the security concerns involved. It becomes a challenge to rely on the advantages, having understood that any modification of such information due to hacking can result in inappropriate treatment. The ability to initiate the wrong training will compromise health and affect the well-being of the population. Additionally, it makes treatment costly and time-wasting since practitioners will not understand the main issue to be addressed, and such makes them incompetent to a certain extent.

In conclusion, it is evident that the existence of PHR makes life a little easier. People do not have to travel long distances for medical attention. All that is needed is a click of a button to secure an appointment. Moreover, time is considerably saved while using the system due to the fast response time. Practitioners typically find it easier to access patients in different parts of the world since they can execute the same at any given instance. It is not restricted to meeting patients during office hours since all that is required is a network connection. However, there exists a defect that relates to

privacy as well as the security of personal information. Even though the essay argued focused on such an issue, it holds water because reputation and integrity make it possible to have a positive impact on the health of an individual. Can you imagine the outcome of any hacking process on the patient's life? The doctor is likely to use inappropriate information in administering treatment. Such an instance makes it an uphill task to get the best medication and can further compromise the health of the individual. To have success in the implementation of the online system in healthcare setup, it is mandatory to have the right processes consideration that make it possible to secure client information. That will make it possible to make the system user-friendly and improve on key aspects related to the health of individuals.

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