

AbstractID: 9543 Title: Overcoming challenges in the implementation of oncology information system

Purpose:

Full implementation of electronic oncology information system (OIS) requires strategic planning and complete staff participation. The major hurdles are the reluctance of staff to make the change, their fear of losing information, increased workload due to data entry, and perceived loss of control. At our institution, we undertook familiarity-based strategy to overcome these challenges in the implementation of OIS to streamline the practice and eliminate paperwork.

Methods and Materials:

Prior to full implementation of the OIS, a steering committee consisting of information technology personnel, medical physicist, radiation oncologist, and administrator was formed to assess the adequacy of our present system utilization. Next, the group engaged the vendor to learn about the clinical process of radiotherapy and the functionality of the software. The functionality was mapped into the clinical processes and divided into tasks separating them in accordance to the disciplines. The steering committee was then expanded to include nurse, therapist, and office staff. A timeline was established with milestones towards completing the implementation. The strategy of implementation was initiated with tasks in the discipline our staff was most familiar with in the OIS rather than the logistics of the clinical processes. Training was then provided to educate the new functionality. In order to showcase the benefits of a more robust implementation, communication tasks such as scheduling, resource handling were implemented. As the staff began to see their results, resistance to the new implementation decreased. The implementation was then expanded beyond the familiar base and monitored weekly by the steering committee.

Results:

Familiarity-based strategy in implementing the OIS is successful. Personnel were interested in learning and teaching newly acquired tools and functionality.

Conclusion:

Familiarity-based implementation of an OIS is a superior strategy compared to clinical processes-based implementation.

Conflict of Interest (only if applicable):