Abstract: Exchanging Clinical Data Electronically: Progress and Remaining Challenges.

There is widespread agreement that lack of complete clinical data at the point of care leads to both waste and suboptimal patient care. With the rise in adoption of electronic health records, the hope is that there will be a simultaneous increase in the extent of electronic health information exchange. In her talk, Dr. Adler-Milstein will describe the approach to pursuing electronic health information exchange in the U.S., highlighting where there are signs of progress and where the remaining challenges lie.


The current national effort to wire the healthcare system and ensure "meaningful use" of electronic health records was predicated on expectations of improved quality and reduced cost. With surprisingly little empirical evidence on these benefits, an experiment in Massachusetts in which three communities were selected to adopt EHRs with assistance from the Massachusetts eHealth Collaborative offers a glimpse into what we might expect the near-term impact of HITECH to be. In her talk, Dr. Adler-Milstein will describe the evaluation of the impact of EHR adoption on healthcare costs in these communities as well as share some data on the return-on-investment from EHR adoption in the pilot practices.