

CIOs, CMIOs Struggling with Data Governance Challenges, Survey Finds

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More than half of surveyed CIOs and CMIOs said they had incomplete or non-existent enterprise-wide governance processes in place, or they were unaware of what their organizations have implemented, according to new research.

Dimensional Insight, a Burlington, Mass.-based developer of business intelligence (BI) solutions, polled 104 members of a professional organization made up of CIOs and CMIOs. Dimensional Insight asked the organization's members about their maturity level and challenges associated with data governance efforts. As today's hospitals try to make better use of the myriad of data available, issues arise around data integrity and access. To overcome these challenges, data governance practices have emerged as a way to help organizations ensure that their data assets can be managed properly.

The survey found that while 44 percent of respondents said they had implemented an enterprise-wide data governance capability at their organization, the remaining 56 percent said they had incomplete or non-existent enterprise-wide governance processes in place, or they were unaware of what their organizations have implemented. Looking ahead, nearly half (49 percent) of respondents plan to adopt data governance in the next year, followed by 29 percent in the next three years.

When it came to ranking the biggest drivers for enterprise-wide data governance adoption, just over two-thirds of respondents (68 percent) agreed that the most common reason was to improve trust in their organization's data. Additional top drivers included: improving care quality (60 percent); improving regulatory compliance (45 percent); improving patient safety (41 percent); managing organizational care costs (31 percent); managing new payment models (21 percent).

What's more, for hospitals that have implemented an enterprise-wide data governance capability, their challenges are similar to those challenges of organizations that have not yet begun the process. In fact, 70 percent of respondents noted that a lack of resources has stalled the adoption process at their organizations, where more than half (57 percent) of those who have adopted the capability noted limited resources as the biggest challenge they faced during the rollout, according to the survey data.

Other challenges associated with implementing enterprise-wide data governance included: variance in leadership buy-in (50 percent); discrepancy in defining data measurements (49 percent); interdepartmental conflict (37 percent); lengthy implementation time (31 percent); and additional costs associated (29 percent).

Additionally, governing measures in the data governance process can be difficult for hospitals, as there are often discrepancies that exist. For example, the survey data found that more than two-thirds of respondents (71 percent) said they have experienced discrepancies between measures across organizational departments (e.g. clinical vs. financial). About half of all respondents also noted they have discrepancies across clinical departments, discrepancies with organizational definitions versus industry definitions, and discrepancies in understanding of previously existing business rules.

“As the amount of data continues to grow, and as healthcare organizations recognize the need to make better use of data, having an effective data governance strategy in place is more important than ever,” Fred Powers, co-founder and CEO of Dimensional Insight, said in a statement. “However, as indicated in our survey, there is still a need to make the governance process easier for everyone involved so that data is consistent, well-documented and trustworthy. The time is now to make that a reality for healthcare.”