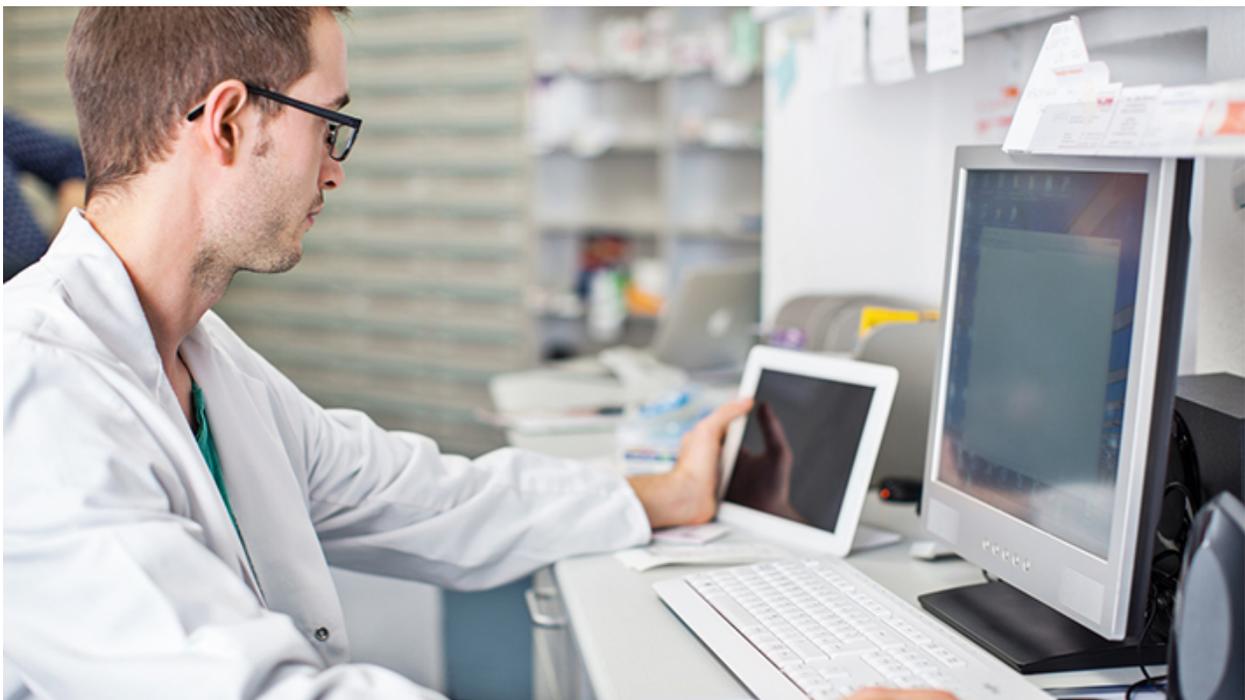


Hospital CIOs grappling with data governance challenges

Trust, access, infrastructure, resources top the list of concerns as IT leaders work to iron out discrepancies between clinical and financial departments, new poll shows.

By Mike Miliard | September 27, 2017 | 02:46 PM



Technology leaders at U.S. hospitals are finding the complex but vital work of data governance to be hard work, according to a new survey of healthcare chief information officers.

Dimensional Insight, a Burlington, Massachusetts-based developer of business intelligence tools, polled more than 100 CIOs and CMIOs about their data governance efforts.

Just 44 percent said they had an enterprise-wide data governance capability at their hospital. More than half (56 percent) said their governance efforts were incomplete or non-existent.

Most recognized the importance of sound data management strategies, with the aim of increasing trust in organizational data; improving quality of care and patient safety, maintaining regulatory compliance, managing costs and succeeding with new payment models.

But 70 percent of respondents said limited resources have hindered the momentum of their data governance initiative and 57 percent said resource scarcity was the biggest challenge they face.

Other challenges associated with implementing enterprise-wide data governance included variance in buy-in from hospital leadership, differences in how data measures are defined, conflict and disagreement between departments and challenges related to time and unforeseen costs.

But a more basic hurdle has to do with governance processes. Nearly three-quarters of the CIOs polled (71 percent) said they've experienced discrepancies between measures across organizational departments, such as those that traffic in clinical or financial data.

About half, meanwhile, said there were discrepancies across clinical departments specifically – with organizational definitions vs. industry definitions, for instance, and with an 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," said Fred Powers, co-founder and CEO of Dimensional Insight, 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.