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HEALTH IT

Healthcare CIOs, CMIOs unveil challenges regarding data governance

By ERIN DIETSCH | Oct 1, 2017 at 5:00 PM



A new survey from Dimensional Insight, a Burlington, Massachusetts-based software company, dives deeper into the data governance initiatives of hospitals around the country, as well as the challenges they're facing.

In August 2017, the company interviewed 104 members of a professional organization comprised of CIOs and CMIOs.

Most respondents (60.58 percent) were from private, nonprofit hospitals. Others came from public hospitals, teaching hospitals, specialty hospitals and more.

Of the participants, 44.23 percent said their organization has adopted an enterprise-wide data governance capability. Another 31.73 percent said their organization was currently implementing such a process, while 21.15 percent said their data governance capability is just based on the department. The remaining 2.88 percent were unsure of what their organization has done.

Organizations that haven't installed an enterprise-wide data governance strategy have numerous reasons for not doing so.

When asked why they have not adopted such a capability, 69.64 percent pointed to limited resources. Slightly over 41 percent said the time it takes to implement is an obstacle, and 19.64 percent noted that anticipated costs associated with it are burdensome. About 16 percent listed minimal ROI as the reason.

Among organizations that have installed an enterprise-wide data governance process, the reasons for doing so varied.

The top reason was improving trust in data, with 67.65 percent of respondents citing it as a driver. Additional factors included improving care quality (60.29 percent), boosting regulatory compliance (45.49 percent), improving patient safety (41.18 percent), managing organizational care costs (30.88 percent) and managing new payment models (20.59 percent).

Still, these organizations faced multiple obstacles while rolling out said capability.

A little more than 57 percent listed limited resource availability as a challenge. Half of the group said variance in leadership buy-in was a problem, and 48.53 percent cited a discrepancy in defining data measurements as an issue. Other hurdles during rollout were interdepartmental conflict, lengthy implementation time and additional costs.

Despite the growing interest in data, CIOs and CMIOs still see measurement discrepancies in their data governance capabilities.

Slightly over 71 percent said there are inconsistencies across organizational departments. About half of respondents noted there's variation across clinical departments, discrepancies in understanding previously existing business rules, and variance associated with organizational definitions versus industry definitions.

"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," Dimensional Insight cofounder and CEO Fred Powers said in a news release. "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."

Photo: goir, Getty Images