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**Attitude of physicians toward use of electronic medical record system in
primary care providing diabetes care and barriers in system
implementation**

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Introduction:

Studies have shown that successful implementation of an electronic medical record (EMR) may require a set of interrelated system and technology factors in primary care practices for ensuring high-quality diabetes care. We carried out this study to identify the attitude of physicians toward use of EMR system in Primary Health Care (PHC) providing diabetes care, and to determine the barriers in system implementation.

Methods:

Diabetes Care Programme (DCP) was established to improve the quality of care in the PHC in Kuwait through several strategies. EMR has been installed by the Ministry of Health at the PHC. We conducted cross-sectional survey from 41 PHC centers and 118 physicians were surveyed to assess their attitude toward the EMR system, to describe the main themes of improvement, and to identify the main barriers faced into practice reality.

Results:

The participants were 118 physicians caring for diabetic patients within PHC setting (mean age = 45.5 years; 55.1% male). The majority of physicians (86 %) thought that EMR system will improve quality of diabetes care. Attitude was not related to age or years of practice. The main themes expected for improvement were in: i) saving and extracting data, ii) follow-up, iii) referral system, iv) screening for complications, v) investigations, vi) drug prescription policy and cost's reduction, vii) implementation of guidelines, viii) statistics, ix) research, audit and quality assurance, and x) connection to other clinics, departments and hospitals. The main barriers identified in system implementation included limitations in technology, software, hardware, and system users.

Conclusions:

Our study have shown that primary care physicians have a positive attitude toward implementation of EMR which may lead to improvements in patient health record and implementation of guidelines set by the DCP. Efforts should focus on overcoming the identified barriers to establish an efficient and effective system.

Key Words: Electronic medical record; Diabetes; Primary care;

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