



Use of electronic medical records

Reminders and decision aids for chronic disease management

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Results of the 2007 National Physician Survey (NPS) show that 81.6% of FPs and GPs believe managing patients with chronic diseases increases the demand on time. Managing these patients can be complex and requires regular monitoring of health status indicators and ongoing reviews of treatment options. Some have suggested that the use of electronic medical records (EMRs) programmed to provide disease management reminders and physician decision aids might enhance patient outcomes.¹

However, the 2007 NPS results show that only 23.6% of FPs and GPs and 28.0% of other specialists use EMRs to enter and retrieve clinical patient notes; 13.3% of FPs and GPs and 5.8% of other specialists use electronic reminder systems for recommended patient care; and 12.3% of FPs and GPs and 6.9% of other specialists use electronic decision aids (Figure 1). These percentages suggest there are many barriers to integrating these higher-level functions into clinical care, even for early adopters of EMRs, and EMRs currently used in Canada do not yet have user-friendly features that facilitate management of chronic disease.

The NPS is a collaborative project of the College of Family Physicians of Canada, the Canadian Medical Association, and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Additional results are available at www.nationalphysiciansurvey.ca. If you would like the opportunity to develop and write a future Fast Fact using the NPS results,

please contact **Harleen Sahota**, National Physician Survey Project Manager, at 800 387-6197, extension 416, or hs@cfpc.ca.

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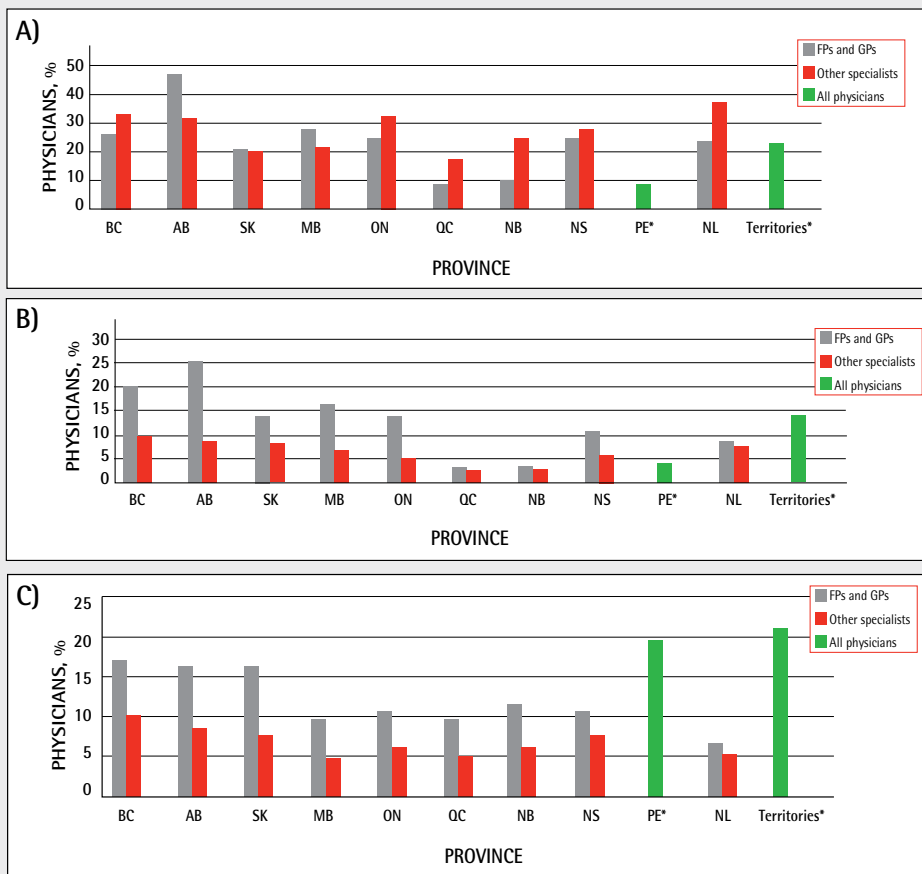
Competing interests

None declared

Reference

1. O'Connor PJ, Crain AL, Rush WA, Sperl-Hillen JM, Gutenkauf JJ, Duncan JE. Impact of an electronic medical record on diabetes quality of care. *Ann Fam Med* 2005;3(4):300-6.

Figure 1. Percentage of physicians, by province and Territory, using electronic records: A) to enter and retrieve clinical patient notes; B) for recommended patient care reminders; and C) for electronic decision aids.



*Family physicians, GPs, and other specialists combined into a single group owing to small sample sizes.