### The Real Meaning of Meaningful Use

Michael Koriwchak, M.D. ENT of Georgia Docs4PatientCare

### Thinking about EMR is Frustrating!

- More people telling us how to do our job
- Another excuse for government intrusion
- We pay for it but everyone else benefits



### The EMR "Culture War"

- Three "stakeholder cultures":
  - -Information technology (IT) culture
  - -Health care culture
  - -Government "culture"

# The Information Technology Culture

- Has succeeded in "digitizing" many parts of the economy, with great benefits
  - Banking, grocery stores, travel
- Health care is the biggest part of the economy living without IT.
- The HIT culture sees great potential in bringing IT to health care.

### HIT Culture - The Dark Side

- They have it all figured out!
- Health care is no different than other parts of the economy workflows, data movement, etc.
- Doctor and patient are just part of the machine
- Confidence in IT vs. Arrogance towards MDs
  - "Unenlightened"
  - Protecting our turf

# The Physician Culture

- The cornerstone of health care is the Doctor Patient Relationship.
  - The Art and Science of Medicine come together
  - "The laying on of hands"
  - This cannot be "digitized"
- Information tech exists only to support the Doctor-Patient Relationship.

### The Government

- Health care is an entitlement program
  - Reward allies, punish enemies
  - Redistribute wealth
  - A "Trojan Horse" for other agendas
- Control of health care information system is essential to control of health care itself
- Therefore Meaningful Use was created as part of the HITECH part of the Stimulus Bill

### What is Meaningful Use?

- Government's definition of "Real EMR" (Phase 1)
  - Eligible Provider
  - Certified EMR system
  - Meaningful use measures
    - 15 Core Measures
      - 3 Core Quality Measures
      - 3 "Alternate Core" Quality Measures
      - 3 "Additional" Quality Measures
    - 5 Menu Set Measures

### What does Meaningful Use Do?

- Stated purpose: To promote EMR use
- Real purposes:
  - Stimulate the health IT industry with doctors' money!
  - Trojan horse to increase government control of health care
  - Incentivize practices who already have EMR into government compliance
  - Define what EMR should be.
- Side effects

# Meaningful Use - Side Effects

- <u>Creates a dysfunctional</u> environment.
  - Replaces free market forces with government regulations
  - Replaces innovation with compliance



# EMR Exposes the Truth on CPT

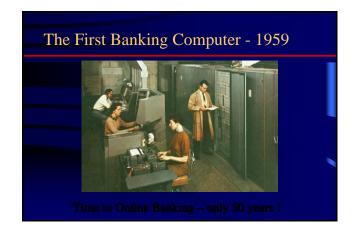
- CPT assumes paper-based documentation
- Intimidates physicians into under-billing for their services using draconian documentation requirements for office visits (E/M services)
- EMR have automated CPT compliance.
- CPT-compliant records are filled with useless data

# Meaningful Use - Side Effects

- MU forces EMR adoption at an unsustainable rate.
  - MU final rule Summer 2010
  - Incentives decrease at the end of 2012
  - Penalties begin 2015
- Practices will make complex decisions too quickly, resulting in EMR failures.

### EMR – Recognize the Problem

- Broadest reach of any technology in health care
- Profound health care cultural change
- Bringing the information age to health care is complex, time consuming and risky.
- Every technology brings unexpected consequences
- This process will take time



# Overcoming Barriers to Health IT

- Health IT Culture
  - -Has much to learn
  - Must make their products better



# What Must We Physicians Do?

- "Think differently" about EMR
  - Reject "gov't branding"
- Leave our comfort zone.
- Lead the EMR movement
- Use EMR for the right reasons.
- Use EMR as an instrument of our vision.

# The Wrong Reasons to get an EMR:

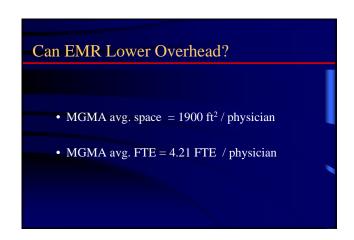
- Meaningful Use!
- Surrender to the Health IT community
- Guilt over paper charts
- Because "the system" benefits

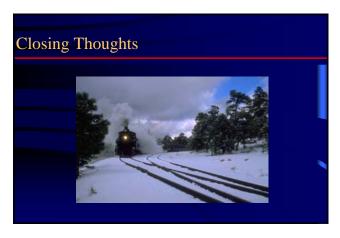
# The Right Reasons to get an EMR:

- To improve our efficiency
- To improve our position
- To empower ourselves
- To control our destiny

# Return on Investment for EMR The ENT of Atlanta Experience Direct Savings Straight to the Bottom Line \$14,000 / MD / yr Space Savings Obvious value \$2000 / MD / yr FTE Savings More difficult to measure \$8500 / MD / yr













# To Learn More:

- Blog: The Wired EMR Practice
  - www.wiredemrdoctor.com
- Health IT Policy:
  - www.docs4patientcare.org