

Few doctors using e-mail

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A study by the Center for Studying Health System Change, in Washington has said fewer than 25 percent of doctors use e-mail to communicate with patients.

The study by the nonprofit healthcare think tank said doctors fear they won't be properly reimbursed for their time if they communicate by e-mail and they fear becoming overloaded with correspondence sent via the Internet, the Rocky Mountain News reported Wednesday.

Researcher Allison Liebhaber said some health plans have begun testing payment plans for e-mail interactions but "reimbursement remains limited and that's likely a major barrier to physician adoption."

"From a physician's perspective, we are taught that in order to get a proper gauge of the problem you have to take a history, and you can't do that over e-mail," said Dr. Jay Krakovitz, health insurer Anthem's Colorado medical director. "Physicians also feel that the time it takes to do this doesn't get reimbursed enough."

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