IT can help CVD management

August 24 2010

Robyn Whittaker from the University of Auckland and colleagues argue that information technology (IT)-based programs can improve cardiovascular disease (CVD) management and patient empowerment, but must be accompanied by supportive social and political environments and active patient and clinician engagement.

In an Essay in this week's PLoS Medicine the authors argue that despite good evidence for the effectiveness of CVD management, large gaps between what is known and what is actually done in health care remain. IT has the potential to support clinicians to close these gaps throughout processes of care delivery. For example, IT can be used to support identification of at-risk individuals, CVD risk assessment and management, care planning, patient self-management, and evaluation of improvements in care and health outcomes, say the authors.

But the authors emphasize the point that to achieve the potential of IT-based programmes, they require a supportive social and political environment, substantial organizational changes, and active patient and clinician engagement.

More information: Wells S, Whittaker R, Dorey E, Bullen C (2010) Harnessing Health IT for Improved Cardiovascular Risk Management. PLoS Med 7(8): e1000313.doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1000313