

# U.S. doctors embracing electronic health records: survey

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Over half have such a system, and another quarter plan to use one in the coming year.

(HealthDay) -- A majority of U.S. physicians have now adopted an electronic health record system as part of their routine practice, a new national survey reveals.

The finding is based on responses provided by nearly 3,200 doctors across the country who completed a mail-in survey in 2011. The survey was conducted by the U.S. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's](#) National Center for Health Statistics as part of an ongoing three-year effort (continuing through 2013) designed to assess perceptions and practices regarding electronic health record systems.

Specifically, the poll found that 55 percent of U.S. doctors have embraced some type of electronic health record system. And roughly 75 percent of those who have done so reported that the type of system they

took on meets the criteria of playing a "meaningful" role in their practice, according to the terms of 2009 [federal legislation](#) (entitled the [Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act](#)) designed to promote the use of [electronic health records](#).

What's more, 85 percent of those doctors who now have an electronic health record system in place said they are either "somewhat" or "very" satisfied with its day-to-day operations (47 percent and 38 percent, respectively). And three in four said [patient care](#) has improved as a result of electronic health record [adoption](#).

The poll also indicated that among those who have yet to embrace an electronic health record system, almost half said they plan to do so in the coming year.

Physician age seems to have played a role in how likely a doctor was to have already brought an electronic health record system into their practice, the findings showed. While 64 percent of those under the age of 50 have done so, the poll revealed that the same was true of only 49 percent among those aged 50 and older.

Office size also seems to matter, with larger [physician practices](#) being more likely to have incorporated an electronic health record system into their administrative infrastructure. Specifically, 86 percent of offices with 11 or more physicians on site had taken on such a system, compared with roughly 60 percent to 62 percent of those with two to 10 physicians and just under 30 percent of single-doctor practices.

But although some kinds of specialists (such as surgeons) were somewhat less likely to have implemented an electronic health record system, race, gender and physician location did not seem to play a role in the likelihood that a doctor's office would or would not bring the technology into their workplace.

Eric Jamoom, of the health care statistics division of the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, and colleagues published their findings July 17 in the *NCHS Data Brief*.

**More information:** For more on electronic health records, visit the [U.S. National Library of Medicine](#).

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