

# Impact of medical scribes on EHR advancement discussed

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(HealthDay)—The increasing use of medical scribes should not be a replacement for improving electronic health records (EHRs), according to a viewpoint piece published online Dec. 15 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

George A. Gellert, M.D., M.P.H., from CHRISTUS Health in San Antonio, and colleagues discuss the growing use of medical [scribes](#), unlicensed individuals hired to enter information into the EHR under clinician supervision, and its implications.

The researchers note that scribes reportedly allow physicians to see more patients; generate more revenue; and improve productivity, efficiency, and patient satisfaction. However, if physicians and hospitals use scribes as an effective workaround to deal with the considerable problems associated with EHRs, there may be a reduction in pressure to improve

EHR usability, and the possible stagnation of EHR technological improvement. Furthermore, there is the potential for scribes to document certain activities, not actually performed, to increase billable charges, avert administrative compliance pressure, or both. There is also potential for functional creep—allowing scribes to enter verbal orders on computerized patient order entry.

"The rise of the medical scribe industry should not be a substitute for much-needed EHR innovation and transition to more highly effective and more functionally efficient EHR systems," the authors write.

**More information:** [Full Text](#)

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