

Physician offices investing in patient portals for EHRs

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(HealthDay)—Practitioners are continuing to invest in electronic health records (EHRs), specifically to improve access for patients, according to an article published June 13 in *Medical Economics*.

The author of the article, Donna Marbury, reports on the initial findings of an ongoing survey by the consulting firm Software Advice. The results indicate that 35 percent of EHR users report investing more money in patient portals in 2014. More resources are being invested in patient portals than in any other application, including e-prescribing, lab integration, and health information exchanges.

According to Marbury, almost half of the respondents surveyed by Software Advice are from practices with three or fewer physicians; 26

percent are from practices with four to 10 physicians; and 27 percent are from practices with 11 or more physicians. Other findings include that a growing number of users utilize mobile and portable devices to access their systems. Additionally, respondents rated challenges less highly than they did benefits.

"In other words, a greater percentage of people said their EHRs delivered on key benefits 'well' or 'very well' than said their EHRs presented challenges to a 'major' or 'moderate' degree," the authors of the survey said, according to the *Medical Economics* article.

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