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Guidelines for the use of email in patient care

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Overview

This site, by Dr Daniel Sands, provides some basic advice on the use of email in 'Electronic Patient Centered Communication' (ePCC). There is a fairly comprehensive set of links to various documents, guidelines and legal documentation and advice, as well as links to organisations and companies that offer commercial email and web based ePCC products. There is also a page of tips and notes, as well as some examples of how Dr Sands uses ePCC.

Content

The site has a very basic look, but do not let this put you off. Despite the somewhat idiosyncratic organisation of the site, there is a lot of very useful information here. The document links include articles from *JAMA*, *New Engl J Med* and the *Annals of Internal Medicine* whilst the organisations include the American Medical Informatics Association and the Harvard Risk Management Foundation. There are also links to three companies that offer ePCC solutions. Healinx (offering an integrated email/medical record product), Medivation and W3Health (both of whom offer web based solutions). This site is not just about links, however; Dr Sands' tips are very informative (covering security issues and the setting up of Doctor/Patient email usage contracts). He also provides information on how he uses the 'signature' function of his email, as well as information on how other hospitals and individuals have chosen to use ePCC. The site is totally oriented at American users, so although the general guidelines are probably universally applicable, the legal information will be of very limited relevance to non US users.

Other comments

Information not available

Evaluation

None

References

1. Danny's Clinical Use of E-mail Page. [<http://clinical.caregroup.org/ePCC/>]