

Designing a Modern, Holistic ECM Strategy for Healthcare

How ECM consulting helps healthcare providers thrive in an atmosphere of change.



Executive Summary

Today's healthcare industry is undergoing continual transformation to meet ever-evolving standards. Collectively, accountable care, population health, ICD-10, and the rising incidence of audits and takebacks require hospitals and health systems to evaluate their business processes and improve accountability. To meet these increasing demands, many healthcare providers are embracing innovative technology solutions.

Among the most promising technologies is enterprise content management (ECM), which can transform the way healthcare providers capture, analyze and report on meaningful patient care data while improving patient outcomes. According to the respected research organization AIIM, an effective ECM implementation encompasses the strategies, methods and tools used to capture, manage, store, preserve and deliver content and documents related to organizational processes.

However, many ECM projects fall short of expectations or fail completely due to misguided requirements, improper process assessment, and a lack of a strategic plan. To reap the benefits of ECM, healthcare organizations must focus not just on the technology, but also on the true operational problems and workflow inefficiencies that ECM can resolve. Successful implementations require coupling the technology with healthcare operations subject matter expertise.

As we'll show in this white paper, an effective ECM implementation involves evaluating business processes and determining how to capture vast quantities of unstructured data to improve mobility, collaboration, reimbursement, regulatory compliance and ultimately patient care. A holistic, enterprise-grade ECM solution can help the organization thrive in an atmosphere of change—today and for years to come.

The Challenge: Unstructured Data Limits Efficiency and Mobility

Healthcare is destined for a digital future. However, paper continues to maintain a stronghold over administrative and clinical operations. Just 35% of organizations have a mandate to drive paper out of the business, with only 19% having endorsement at the board level. And as many as 56% have an environmental impact policy that requires a reduced use of paper, but only 24% actively promote it.¹

The implications of this extend far beyond any environmental effects. Electronic medical records have changed the way clinical data is captured. Structured data (patient names, diagnosis codes, etc.) is standardized and easily accessible from anywhere within the organization and beyond.

However, a significant amount of unstructured content is developed during the patient care lifecycle. It comprises all of the information that resides outside of an accessible, standardized computer platform. It includes everything from handwritten notes on paper forms and signed patient consent forms to referrals, faxes, invoices, purchase orders, audio files, email messages, and more.

There is a general consensus among analysts from Gartner and Merrill Lynch that unstructured data accounts for 80% of the data that exists in a healthcare organization. Moreover, the Health Story Project estimates that 1.2 billion clinical documents are produced in the U.S. each year. Nearly 60% of these documents contain valuable patient care data that's inaccessible to clinicians.²

Most unstructured content exists within departmental silos. These silos prevent key stakeholders from gaining a holistic view of the high-level priorities and performance of the organization. Electronic health records (EHRs) offer many benefits, but EHRs are often data silos in their own right.

Moreover, as computers replace paper-based documentation in healthcare systems, technology often becomes a barrier between clinicians and patients. Yet when clinicians and patients can access content from any device at any location, this barrier diminishes. Studies show that 79% of physicians believe the use of mobile devices can help clinicians improve the coordination of care.³ Whether a physician needs to review labs or collaborate with another provider from outside the four walls of the hospital, unstructured content severely restricts the flexibility and agility that mobile devices offer.

In addition to patient care and service, unstructured content poses a threat to efficiency and productivity in multiple back-office departments including:

- Compliance
- Accounting
- Legal
- Facilities management
- Medical records
- Finance
- Hospital administration
- Record security
- Disaster recovery

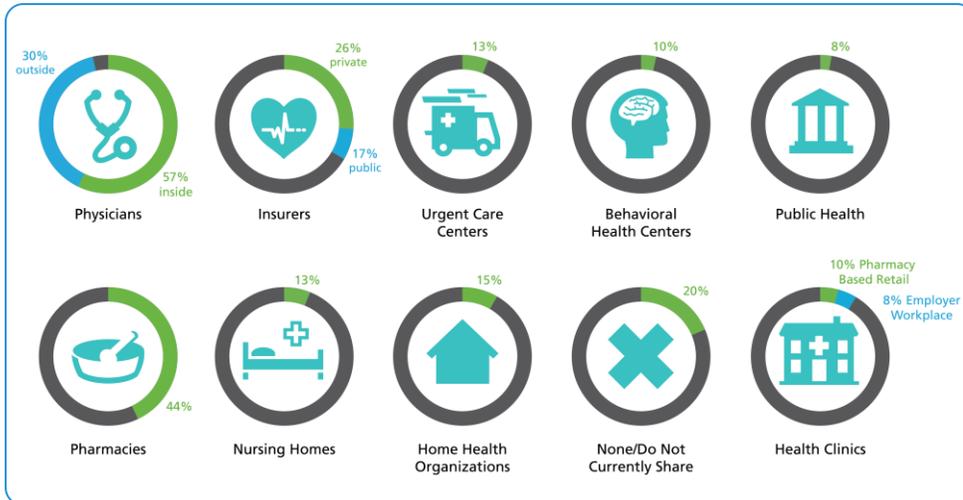
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¹ Industry Watch: Paper Wars 2014, an Update from the Battlefield, AIIM, 2014

² Unstructured Data in Electronic Health Record (EHR) Systems: Challenges and Solutions, Datamark, Inc., 2013

³ Healthcare delivery of the future: How digital technology can bridge time and distance between clinicians and consumers, PwC Health Research Institute, 2014



The bottom line is that much of the clinical and operational data that is needed to provide quality patient care, ensure regulatory compliance, and accelerate payment cycles is difficult to access and standardize across the organization. And without a holistic, integrated view of clinical and operational content, patient care and service can become inefficient and operational costs can rise.

Solution: Designing a Holistic ECM Approach

Clearly, the impact of such vast quantities of unstructured content is significant. This is where enterprise content management comes into play. With ECM, healthcare organizations can manage all content centrally and securely while offering individual users and departments the flexibility and agility they need to accomplish important clinical and operational objectives. ECM perfectly complements EHRs and other clinical and back-office applications.

Creating a Holistic ECM Solution

While the advantages of ECM are many, to truly capitalize on them and realize a significant return on investment, healthcare organizations must design an ECM solution with business process improvement in mind. When an organization focuses exclusively on the technology without regard to the business processes it must accommodate, ECM will fall short of expectations or fail completely. To reap the benefits of ECM, healthcare organizations must design a solution through a proper assessment of current state processes and the development of an optimized future state.

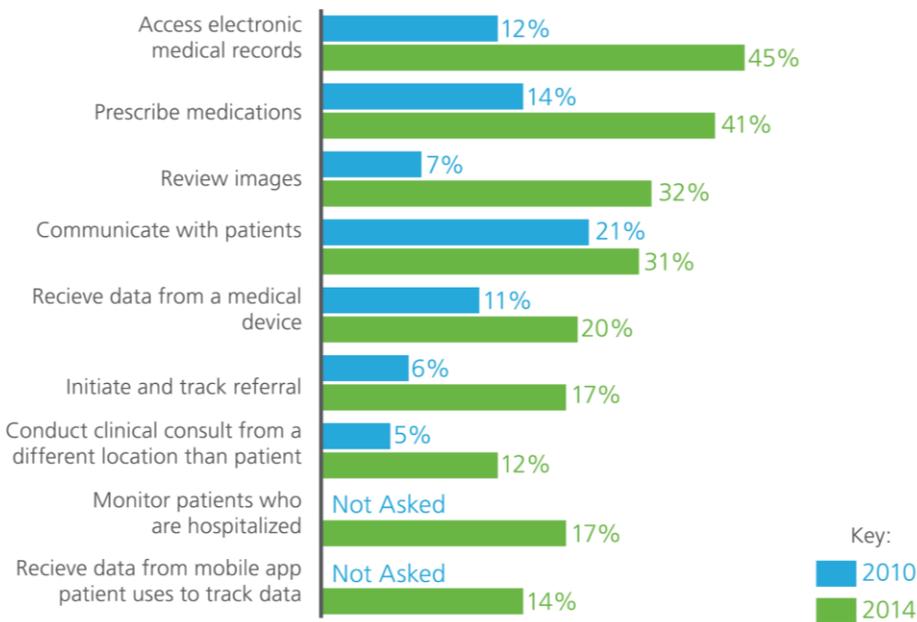
For example, an ECM solution focused on business process improvement would identify how paperwork demands are escalating for clinicians. According to a survey by the Physician's Foundation, physicians spend more than 22% of their time on non-clinical paperwork. The effective ECM strategy would consider how paperwork is tied to physician and patient satisfaction and include process improvements to address the issue.

When an ECM solution is designed with a holistic approach, benefits stretch across the enterprise. Departmental silos are eliminated, ensuring that all structured and unstructured content is accessible from everywhere in the organization.

A holistic approach also ensures that cost savings and patient outcome improvements are not limited to specific clinical and operational areas. With the right strategy, the automation that ECM provides will extend productivity and efficiency benefits throughout the enterprise.

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Physicians report performing more healthcare activities on a mobile device during the last 4 years



Source: 2014 HR Clinician Workforce Survey & 2010 Physicians Survey

Success Story

A large healthcare facilities operator needed a way to connect data from 700 locations using more than 20 EMR vendors. Xerox ECM Consulting used a vendor neutral approach to integrate data and provide access from any location. With ECM, the organization was able to streamline workflows associated with sharing information and broaden access to critical data for decision-making.

Performing a Business Process Assessment

In addition to ensuring a holistic approach and enabling mobile access, the right ECM strategy will include a thorough assessment of the clinical and business processes that the ECM technology must accommodate. A proper assessment will ensure that the ECM platform is built with a true understanding of the organization's current state and without a shortsighted future state design. All business process improvements must be designed around the organization's true needs, not around the vendor's platform.

The first thing to consider when conducting an assessment is that all requirements and expectations need to be gathered and documented with the overall enterprise strategy in mind. Those requirements can then be mapped to specific business processes and ECM tactics that achieve those strategic objectives.

Beyond this, the proper assessment methodology will focus on the people and processes within the organization. This involves:

- Identifying where an ECM solution would have the greatest potential
- Determining how unstructured content enters and exits the organization
- Documenting the content and business requirements the organization expects to address
- Identifying problem areas like gaps, risks and bottlenecks where work slows or stops
- Interacting with employees and observing their daily operations. The actual activities performed by an organization or department can be different from what their employees may describe, so observation is crucial
- Reviewing content lifecycles to evaluate how content is created and determine organizational touch points, workflow implications, and business impacts (e.g., revenue, cash flow, patient LOS, risk, compliance, etc.)
- Planning for change management and a long-term vision across the organization

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Once these activities are performed, a roadmap can be created, identifying an ECM solution that addresses the business process improvement opportunities unique to the organization.

Success Story

A children's hospital in the southern U.S. needed a way to streamline its accounts payable function. Xerox ECM Consulting designed a virtual mailroom solution and cloud-based ECM software, enabling the hospital to eliminate manual processes, reduce FTEs by seven, and increase productivity to allow personnel to focus on critical tasks.

The modern ECM platform must accommodate growing needs for mobility and collaboration by enabling access to content from multiple devices and through cloud technologies.

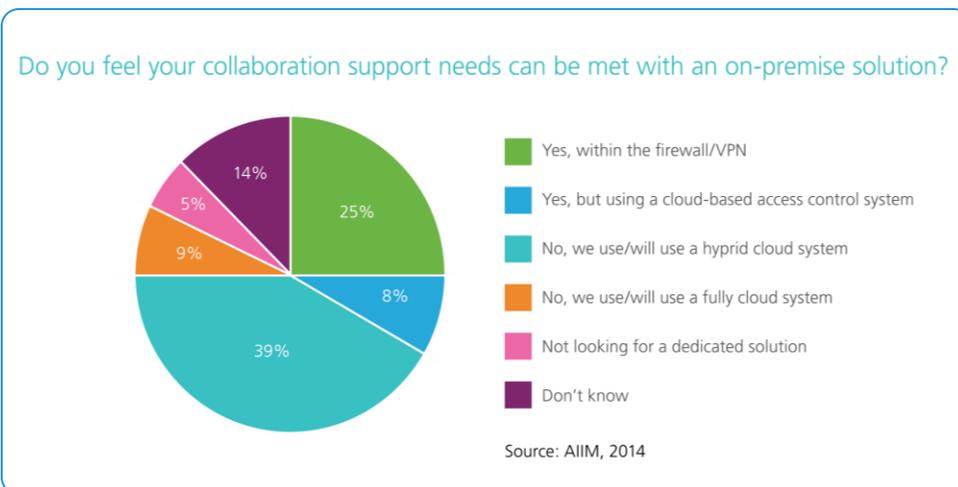
Designing an ECM Solution for the Future

Today's ECM solutions are a far cry from the simple document imaging and searching functions of years past. Not only has the technology evolved, but also the expectations of users across healthcare organizations have broadened. The consumerization of technology and the hyper-connectivity of today's world require an ECM solution that can accommodate continuous change.

Many healthcare organizations find themselves hampered by outdated ECM solutions that require growing administrative costs, custom developments and extensive maintenance. Moreover, legacy ECM solutions are less likely to serve the existing needs of the organization or are incompatible with other modern technology solutions. All of these factors contribute to a high cost of ownership, decreased value, unnecessary inefficiencies and limited productivity potential.

The modern ECM platform must accommodate growing needs for mobility and collaboration by enabling access to content from multiple devices and through cloud technologies. By providing access through a web-based platform, cloud-based ECM solutions can be fast to deploy and low on start-up costs. Additionally, the cloud offers fast and easy access to content from anywhere on any device, ensuring that healthcare providers have the content they need to collaborate with other clinicians. And while improved clinical decision-making is paramount, gaining access to relevant content for operational decisions is also important to hospital administration.

Indicating the growing need for cloud-based solutions, an AIIM study on collaboration shows that nearly 40% of respondents wish to put some of their active documents in the cloud.⁴ While many are concerned about the privacy restrictions of cloud-based solutions, particularly with patient data, the benefits of cloud-based ECM solutions are becoming too significant to deny.



⁴ Services Drives Success (or Not) in ECM Implementations, AIIM, 2014

In addition to accommodating cloud technologies, today's ECM solutions must also satisfy the needs of a growing mobile workforce. AIIM research shows that 45 % of organizations polled indicate that mobile access to content is very important or vital to their organizations.⁵ When mobile access is enabled, the healthcare organization's workforce has access to content at anytime, anywhere, on any device, which ensures maximum efficiency and productivity.

Enlisting the Support of External Services

Designing a modern ECM solution that meets the business process improvement needs of the entire healthcare organization is no small feat. Many organizations implement a solution with only the help of the technology vendor's professional services team and find that it falls short of meeting objectives or fails to deliver on cost and productivity savings. In fact, AIIM research notes that as much as 40 % of an ECM implementation's costs could be the result of rework due to poor planning and requirements gathering.⁶

To capitalize on ECM solutions and reap the many benefits they offer, it's important to enlist the services of experienced consulting professionals who work exclusively in healthcare and have expertise in organizational transformation and workflow improvement. An objective third party will have expertise in gathering requirements, evaluating business processes, and determining the appropriate technology platform. When an ECM platform is already in use, the consulting organization can optimize existing technology to ensure it ties to optimal business processes rather than fitting business processes to the technology.

Additionally, an external consulting organization will determine an appropriate change management strategy and provide training to show users not only how to use the ECM technology, but also how to effectively drive process improvements.

ECM Strategy Development

Xerox ECM Consulting helps healthcare providers with every phase of ECM strategy development:

- Conduct a discovery workshop
- Assess and analyze current and future state
- Validate strategy
- Identify cost reduction opportunities
- Design business process improvement roadmap
- Develop and manage project plans
- Deploy and implement technologies
- Train, test and manage go-live
- Support and maintain
- Define ECM success measures
- Conduct post-live audit

Most importantly, consulting professionals help ensure business process improvement and an effective ECM implementation by conducting a thorough assessment that identifies problems, satisfies stakeholder considerations, and determines where efficiency and productivity benefits will have the greatest clinical, financial, and operational impact.

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⁵ *Services Drives Success (or Not) in ECM Implementations*, AIIM, 2014

⁶ *Services Drives Success (or Not) in ECM Implementations*, AIIM, 2014

Conclusion: Meeting the Changing Needs of Healthcare with ECM

As the healthcare industry evolves, it's important for provider organizations to adopt technologies that will accommodate accountable care business models, shrinking reimbursements, rising compliance mandates, and more. With this in mind, ECM solutions hold great promise in improving productivity, efficiency, and cost savings in the business processes that drive today's healthcare operations.

To avoid the inefficiencies of yesterday's ECM solutions or an ECM implementation that fails to meet strategic objectives, it's important to conduct a thorough assessment that identifies where the technology will have the greatest impact. At the same time, the ECM solution must be designed with a holistic, enterprise-wide perspective.

An objective, third-party consulting group can thoroughly evaluate an organization's business processes and then design and implement an enterprise-grade ECM platform. Ultimately, with the right assessment and strategy, a consulting firm with experience in ECM solutions designed specifically for healthcare will drive ongoing process improvements while enabling the organization to thrive in an atmosphere of change.

Recommendations for an Effective ECM Solution

Healthcare organizations that use ECM are able to provide access to content while also ensuring mobility and collaboration in clinical and back-office environments.

Recommendations include:

- Identify needs and improvement opportunities
- Optimize core clinical and business processes
- Eliminate data silos
- Design a holistic, enterprise-wide solution
- Ensure proper communication and training across the enterprise
- Develop a modern solution for today and tomorrow
- Enlist the expertise of a healthcare consulting firm
- Choose an objective third-party firm that works exclusively in healthcare

Trust Xerox

Xerox ECM Consulting helps healthcare organizations design and implement ECM solutions that eliminate data silos and optimize business processes while ensuring mobility and collaboration in clinical environments. We offer the experience, expertise and longevity that enable healthcare organizations to evolve with the transformative change that exists in healthcare today.

Xerox has more than 100 years of experience in document management and 30 years in healthcare. In addition to this longevity, we offer forward-looking application deployment as well as successful transformations from legacy systems to a digital world. In the end, you can trust us to provide a tailored technology solution that fits the unique needs of your healthcare organization and drives lasting process improvements.

For more information about Xerox ECM Consulting, visit www.services.xerox.com/healthcare-solutions/enus or contact us at 877-414-2676.