

## Leveraging on Information Technology to Enhance Patient Care: A Doctor's Perspective of Implementation in a Singapore Academic Hospital

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### Abstract

*Information technology (IT) can improve the safety of patient care by minimising prescribing errors and organising patient-specific information from diverse databases. Apart from legibility, prescribing safety is enhanced as online access to databases carrying patient drug history, scientific drug information and guideline reference, and patient-specific information is available to the physician. Such specific information includes discharge summaries, surgical procedure summaries, laboratory data and investigation reports. In addition, decision support and prompts can be built in to catch errant orders. For such system implementations to work, the IT backbone must be fast, reliable and simple to use. End-user involvement and ownership of all aspects of development are key to a usable system. However, the hospital leadership must also have the will to mandate and support these development efforts. With such support, the design and implementation team can then map out a strategy where the greatest impact is achieved in both safety and enhanced information flow. The system should not be considered a finished work, but a continual work in progress. The National University Hospital's continuously updated Computerised Patient Support System (CPSS) is an example of an IT system designed to manage information and facilitate prescribing. It is a client-server based, one-point ordering and information access portal for doctors that has widespread adoption for drug prescription at outpatient and discharge medication usage areas. This system has built in safety prompts and rudimentary decision support. It has also become the choice means of accessing patient-related databases that impact on diagnoses and management.*

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