

EVIDENTIARY PROBLEMS OF THE ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD (EMR)

David Donnersberger MD, JD, MS, FCLM
Clerkship Director Internal Medicine

Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine drdonnersberger@yahoo.com

Electronic Medical Records (EMR) offer tremendous advantages and pitfalls to modern health care. In 2004 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services opened the Office of the National Coordinator of Health Information Technology (ONCHIT) to incentivize and promulgate standards for EMR systems. This discussion will begin with an interactive demonstration of a popular EMR system and a comparison of its order-entry and note-writing tools to those of traditional paper charts. The discussion will then outline current and future difficulties created when the legal system requires production of physician, hospital, and pharmacy records originally generated in electronic form. Live comparisons will be made between paper recreations of the EMR that were later produced for legal proceedings and the real-time EMR system accessed by the provider team at the time of care. Finally, new standards being promulgated by national medical record associations for the storage and reproduction of EMR data will be examined and evaluated.