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Economy Forces Most Wired Hospitals to Look Closely at IT Spending Clinical IT Still a Priority

CHICAGO—July 7, 2009—The economic crisis is forcing many hospitals to hit the brakes when it comes to capital investments, including delaying and scaling down information technology (IT) projects. The 100 Most Wired hospitals are torn between building on their IT successes and keeping a sharp eye on budgets. Marking its 11th year, the Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study continues to lead the field in analyses and benchmarking of healthcare IT.

Four hospitals from Connecticut were named to the 2009 Most Wired list:

Greenwich Hospital—Most Wired and Most Wireless
Hartford Hospital—Most Wired and Most Wireless
Norwalk Hospital—Most Improved
Yale New Haven Health System—Most Wired and Most Wireless

“The economic slowdown is forcing hospitals to look closely at IT spending,” says Alden Solovy, executive editor of *Hospitals & Health Networks* magazine. “Most Wired hospitals are doing their best to stay the course.”

To complicate matters, the great unknown of health care reform looms in the near future and a number of regulatory changes are already heading down the pike, including the shift to ICD-10.

“As the health reform debate continues, it’s clear that IT will play an even more important role in the health system of tomorrow,” says Rich Umbdenstock, president and CEO of the American Hospital Association (AHA). “Most Wired hospitals help illustrate IT in action—improving efficiency, quality and safety of care while helping to control costs.”

Hospitals also continue to invest in IT that supports quality and safety initiatives. Investment in electronic medication management is considered one of the fundamentals of using IT to improve care. The 2009 Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study shows an overall increase in both provider order entry of medications and electronic bedside matching at the time medications are administered.

“Hospitals clearly recognize that in spite of lower budgets they still need to invest in IT,” says Sunny Sanyal, president of McKesson Provider Technologies. “We’re seeing hospitals reprioritize. We’re having more discussions on hospital resources than ever before.”

Of the organizations completing the survey this year, 38 hospitals and health systems—6.8 percent of the sample—have effectively deployed information technology at both ends of the medication administration process. This compares with 23 hospitals and health systems in 2008, or 4.1 percent of the sample.

At the typical hospital responding to the survey, 26 percent of medications are entered electronically by physicians, compared with 19 percent in 2008. The typical respondent has 40 percent of medications matched at the bedside, compared with 30 percent in 2008.

The Most Wired Survey is conducted annually by *Hospitals & Health Networks* magazine, the journal of the AHA, which uses the results to name the 100 Most Wired hospitals and health systems. It focuses on how the nation’s hospitals use information technologies for quality, customer service, public health and safety, business processes and workforce issues.

Hospitals & Health Networks conducted the 2009 survey in cooperation with McKesson Corp. and the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives. The July *H&HN* cover story detailing results is available at www.hhnmag.com.

About the Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study

Hospitals & Health Networks, the journal of the AHA, conducts the voluntary Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study annually and names the 100 Most Wired.

McKesson Corporation is a healthcare services and information technology company dedicated to helping its customers deliver high-quality healthcare by reducing costs, streamlining processes, and improving the quality and safety of patient care.

CHIME was formed with the dual objective of serving the professional development needs of healthcare chief information officers and advocating the more effective use of information management within health care.