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HOW DOES THE EMR AFFECT THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HEALTHCARE PROVIDER GROUPS DURING COVID-19: NURSES’ PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT
The growth in usage of Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) in hospitals in the United States have introduced various challenges to the communication between nurses and physicians. During a pandemic such as COVID-19, utilizing EMR communication is vital for healthcare provider groups. Still, lots of factors affect the use of EMR for nurse-physician communication. We will utilize a grounded theory approach to try to uncover factors affecting EMR-enabled communication between nurses and physicians. This study will take a longitudinal qualitative approach to collect data from nurses prior to and during COVID-19 pandemic. We expect to uncover factors affecting nurse-physician communication both before the pandemic and during the pandemic. This will be the first research that takes a grounded theory approach to longitudinally explore factors affecting nurse-physician communication. By uncovering these factors, we hope to unveil hidden factors that can be further researched by researchers and dealt with by practitioners.

Keywords
EMR; Nurse-Physician Communication, COVID-19, Longitudinal Qualitative Research, Grounded Theory Approach.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT
In this paper, we intend to study the effect of Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) on communication between nurses and physicians during COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that a longitudinal qualitative study is needed to further understand how COVID-19 affected communication between nurses and physicians using EMR. We want to uncover factors that came to play during this pandemic and how these factors are affecting the usage of EMR systems. We suspect that EMR communication is not as utilized as it is supposed to be, especially during COVID-19. Nurse-physician communication affects patient safety. This is true because ineffective communication between nursing staff and resident physicians leads to numerous educational and patient-care interruptions (Lapointe et al., 2018). While the use of information systems such as EMRs is supposed to increase cooperation, various studies and observations show that they can inhibit communication that is becoming mainly virtual (Michel, 2017). This virtual communication has been reported as passive and incomplete (Tan et al., 2017), and it was also reported that, if fully relied on as a means of communication, it can negatively affect patient care (Yusuf et al., 2018). Although there is a respectively big body of research studying factors affecting both positive and negative outcomes of EMR communication between nurses and physicians (Holmgren et al., 2016), there is still no research that looks at the effect of a pandemic such as COVID-19 on physician-nurse e-communication using EMR.

To conduct this study, we commenced by collecting data from nurses working at a big hospital in the United States in the second quarter of 2019. Hence, the first chunk of data was collected roughly six months prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the second chunk of data, interviews will be used to collect the second wave of data from nurses during COVID-19 pandemic (last quarter of 2021). This will allow us to compare factors affecting the utilization of EMR communication during a pandemic.

REFERENCES