

Week 4: Workarounds and Their Implications for Patient Safety

1. What is a workaround? Identify a workaround (specific to technology used in a hospital setting) that you have used or perhaps seen someone else use and analyze why you feel this risk-taking behavior was chosen over behavior that conforms to a safety culture. What are the risks? Are there benefits? Why or why not?
2. Discuss the current patient safety characteristics used by your current workplace or clinical site. Identify at least three aspects of your workplace or clinical environment that need to be changed with regard to patient safety (including confidentiality), and then suggest strategies for change.

Answer:

Workaround in healthcare is also known as “shortcut” or “bending the rule” to get the job done. In healthcare facilities when a piece of equipment, electronic health record, a policy or procedure is not working, healthcare providers NEEDS TO MAKE IT WORK (Litwack, 2018), but how? Time is essential in managing patients, when there is so much to do in such a very small amount of time, healthcare providers are doing workaround to make it work.

As a healthcare provider, I find it very frustrating when technology does not cooperate. I visit patients in their homes. Most of the time, my ipad does not have service inside my patient’s home. Thus, I have to handwrite all the information from my assessments and for the things that I did for them for that visit. Not only that, not having service on my ipad means I cannot obtain a real time signature, so then my patient will sign this sheet called route sheet. I then input the information at home. I hate doing this because I create paper trail which is a HIPAA violation at some point. If I am not careful with the paper trail that I create, I can risk my patient’s information. I also think that this is taking up too much of my time because technically, I am charting twice, by hand and then through the computer.