Boston Hospitals Go Epic: Hear From A Holdout

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In the Boston marketplace, Partners Healthcare is is replacing 30 years of self developed software with Epic. Boston Medical Center is replacing Eclipsys (Allscripts) with Epic. Lahey Clinic is replacing Meditech/Allscripts with Epic. Cambridge Health Alliance and Atrius already run Epic. Rumors abound that others are in Eastern Massachusetts are considering Epic. Why has Epic gained such momentum over the past few years?

Watching the implementations around me, here are a few observations:

1. Epic sells software, but more importantly it has perfected a methodology to gain clinician buy in to adopt a single configuration of a single product. Although there are a few clinician CIOs, most IT senior management teams have difficulty motivating clinicians to standardize work. Epic's project methodology establishes the governance, the processes, and the staffing to accomplish what many administrations cannot do on their own.

2. Epic eases the burden of demand management. Every day, clinicians ask me for innovations because they know our self-built, cloud hosted, mobile friendly core clinical systems are limited only by our imagination. Further, they know that we integrate department specific niche applications very well, so best of breed or best of suite is still a possibility. Demand for automation is infinite but supply is always limited. My governance committees balance requests with scope, time, and resources. It takes a great deal of effort and political capital. With Epic, demand is more easily managed by noting that desired features and functions depend on Epic's release schedule. It's not under IT control.

3. It's a safe bet for meaningful use stage 2. Epic has a strong track record of providing products and the change management required to help hospital and professionals achieve meaningful use. There's no meaningful use certification or meaningful use related product functionality risk.

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