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Jack Buckanavage

Randall W. Lee

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The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) has led the healthcare system to see a drastic increase in quality care technology platforms, some claiming to improve patient outcomes or create efficiencies within healthcare. With this healthcare technology advancement has come a greater demand to provide speedy and accurate medical documentation that is readily available to patients, who often eagerly await test and imaging results with a list of questions.

As physicians, we are aware that change is inevitable. Unfortunately, there is an increasing workload for each patient interaction, which puts strain on physicians as they continue to balance clinical practice, documentation, reporting, and communication, all while managing other unpredictable obligations within medicine, let alone their personal lives.

While it is difficult to put forth a singular estimate for how much time is spent on medical documentation, studies have shown that this can account for up to 50% of clinical time in a practicing physician's workday. Unfortunately, this increase in demand for documentation has consequently been associated with increased physician burnout. Given this well-known physician complaint, it becomes imperative that we match new technology that overcomes clinician pain points and reduces burnout.

Enter *Abridge*, a novel medical technology company attempting to reduce these burdens via a two-pronged attack. First, the cutting-edge technology transcribes medical conversations in real-time, meaning a visit may be documented and entered in a patient’s chart by the time a

physician leaves the room. Interestingly, the technology can exclude non-pertinent information from a normal non-clinical conversation and correctly format pertinent clinical information into a structured note. In addition, the program can send follow-up results to patients, eliminating the need for a physician or physician's office to manually update individual patients. The application has been developed using HIPAA-compliant cloud data storage centers with encryption and even uses automated systems to detect any suspicious activity. Not to mention, the company conducts vulnerability scans and rigorous testing via third-party security firms weekly, ensuring that patient-protected health information (PHI) is guarded against the various malware of the Internet.

While there is an undeniable absence of this technology in most of today's healthcare systems, some hospital networks have partnered with Abridge and are trialing or using their system. Others are curious and asking important questions about the technology's broad applicability across medical specialties and systems. For example, how will the technology incorporate and re-write charts in emergency rooms, where patients frequently update physicians on previously forgotten aspects of a history? Generally, any information captured during an interaction with the physician has the potential to be captured by this technology and incorporated into the note, hopefully in an appropriate fashion. Other questions related to system integration, accuracy, medical-legal / CMS implications, cost vs. increased productivity, clinician satisfaction, patient comfort, consent, etc. are being evaluated by many healthcare systems who are finding themselves asking similarly tough questions related to new technologies. It's common for the medical industry to take time or slowly adapt new technologies, which will allow Abridge to gain considerable feedback and improve their product in the coming months to years.

With further development and integration, hopefully, this technology will prompt immediate questions about medical terminology or aspects of a patient chart before a patient leaves the clinical setting, which could enhance patient care (medication refills, depression screening, smoking cessation) and satisfy other medical metrics.

There is no denying the potential efficiencies of *Abridge's* technology and that their creative solution could be welcomed by clinicians. Timely and efficient documentation has long been a thorn in the heel of healthcare providers since EMRs exploded onto the scene. If *Abridge* can deliver as advertised, the medical field may become engrossed with their solution, just as society became infatuated with *ChatGPT* in recent memory.

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