



**IDEA GROUP PUBLISHING**

701 E. Chocolate Avenue, Suite 200, Hershey PA 17033-1240, USA  
Tel: 717/533-8845; Fax 717/533-8661; URL-<http://www.idea-group.com>

**ITB10355**

## **Chapter IV**

# **How to Start or Improve a KM System in a Hospital or Healthcare Organization**

A.H. Rubenstein, IASTA Inc., USA

E. Geisler, Illinois Institute of Technology, USA

## **ABSTRACT**

*One of the key factors that distinguishes enterprises of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is the emphasis on knowledge and information. Knowledge management is an important means by which organizations can better manage information, and more importantly, knowledge. Unlike other techniques, knowledge management is not always easy to define, because it encompasses a range of concepts, management tasks, technologies, and practices, all of which come under the umbrella of the knowledge management. This chapter deals with two aspects of knowledge management systems: (a) why KM systems are needed, and (b) how to get started on designing and rolling out a new or improved KM system. The inferences are drawn from the direct experiences the authors have had during their academic and consulting activities in many health sector organizations.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Hospitals and other healthcare organization need bricks and mortar, human resources, medical technology, financial systems, and other infrastructure items. In addition, they need effective ways of capturing, preserving, transforming, retrieving, and

This chapter appears in the book, *Creating Knowledge-Based Healthcare Organizations*, edited by Nilmini Wickramasinghe, Jatinder N.D. Gupta and Sushil Sharma. Copyright © 2005, Idea Group Inc. Copying or distributing in print or electronic forms without written permission of Idea Group Inc. is prohibited.

applying *knowledge* about past experiences and subsequent “lessons learned” to *current* and *future* needs. These are commonly called *Knowledge Management (KM)* systems.

Here are some brief definitions:

1. *KM* is the management of intellectual capital (IC) in the interests of the enterprise.
2. *IC* includes knowledge, information, lessons learned, and other data held for use over time.
3. Intellectual nuggets (*nuggets*) are the units that carry knowledge, lessons learned, etc.
4. *Super-nuggets* are items tied specifically to express or implied needs of the organization.
5. The most valuable structure of a nugget (N) is a compound statement which has an “If x, ...then y” format: If you do this in a certain way, ... then you can achieve or avoid the following consequence(s).
6. Some nuggets are, in fact, *causal statements*, but many others only suggest strong *correlations* or *influence* of actions on outcomes (consequences).

## QUESTIONS SURROUNDING KM SYSTEMS

*Why does a hospital or healthcare organization need a new or improved KM system?*

- To bridge knowledge “*silos*” in specialties and support functions.
- To learn from its own experiences and experiences of other organizations.
- To avoid repeating or duplicating major or even disastrous mistakes in, for example:
  - disease management;
  - infection control;
  - misuse or abuse of instruments;
  - duplication of expensive equipment.
- To support training at all levels.
- To support weaker or resource-poor units with experience from stronger or resource rich units.
- To share “tricks of the trade.”
- To help avoid pitfalls in:
  - organizational design;
  - staffing;
  - work flow.
- To exchange methods of:
  - productivity improvement;
  - cost savings;
  - patient services.

*Does everyone need a KM system?*

- In general, *yes*, to help: organize, preserve, retrieve, and use lessons learned and other nuggets about his/her job, and the internal and external environment.
- However, there are vast differences among individuals and individual information needs and style — some people still pine for the all-but-obsolete card catalog in the public library. Others have gone “all electronic” and will never look back.

4 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/start-improve-system-hospital-healthcare/7225](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/start-improve-system-hospital-healthcare/7225)

## Related Content

---

### Secure Healthcare Monitoring Sensor Cloud With Attribute-Based Elliptical Curve Cryptography

Rajendra Kumar Dwivedi, Rakesh Kumar and Rajkumar Buyya (2022). *Research Anthology on Securing Medical Systems and Records* (pp. 922-941). [www.irma-international.org/chapter/secure-healthcare-monitoring-sensor-cloud-with-attribute-based-elliptical-curve-cryptography/309035](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/secure-healthcare-monitoring-sensor-cloud-with-attribute-based-elliptical-curve-cryptography/309035)

### Physician Characteristics Associated with Early Adoption of Electronic Medical Records in Smaller Group Practices

Liam O'Neill, Jeffery Talbert and William Klepack (2010). *Handbook of Research on Advances in Health Informatics and Electronic Healthcare Applications: Global Adoption and Impact of Information Communication Technologies* (pp. 423-432). [www.irma-international.org/chapter/physician-characteristics-associated-early-adoption/36395](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/physician-characteristics-associated-early-adoption/36395)

### Good IT Requires Good Communication

Charles H. Andrus and Mark Gaynor (2013). *Cases on Healthcare Information Technology for Patient Care Management* (pp. 122-125). [www.irma-international.org/chapter/good-requires-good-communication/73945](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/good-requires-good-communication/73945)

### Standardization Strategies in Practice - Examples from Healthcare

Nina Lundberg and Ole Hanseth (2001). *Strategies for Healthcare Information Systems* (pp. 46-65). [www.irma-international.org/chapter/standardization-strategies-practice-examples-healthcare/29877](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/standardization-strategies-practice-examples-healthcare/29877)

### Patient Involvement in Health Care. Different Terms Same Concept?

Aliki Xochelli, Kostas Stamatopoulos and Christina Karamanidou (2019). *International Journal of Reliable and Quality E-Healthcare* (pp. 1-10). [www.irma-international.org/article/patient-involvement-in-health-care-different-terms-same-concept/219282](http://www.irma-international.org/article/patient-involvement-in-health-care-different-terms-same-concept/219282)