

# DO YOU HAVE THE BEST EMR SETUP AND SUPPORT FROM YOUR IT COMPANY?

This ten question, value-discovery quiz will open your eyes to what you're missing!

## 1. Are you confident that your network, wireless system and firewall are optimized for your EMR?

It's a Monday morning, all of your doctors are in the office, you've got an especially heavy load of new patients on the schedule, and, day of all days, your computer system is crawling. It's so slow. We're talking about "click, wait-ten-seconds" slow.

Why does this happen? What's the problem?

What we've learned is that not all networks are created equal.

What configurations to avoid, when to upgrade equipment, special setups for top performance — our list of tips and tricks was built by our experience with nearly 300 clients and over 2500 users.

### Confidence Score:

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We have problems all the time

Our clinic runs very smoothly.

## 2. Do you have proactive, high level reviews with your IT company that look at emerging technologies to improve the efficiency of your EMR?

Technology changes very fast. Just as there are new apps for our phones almost every month, there are new companies and software introduced into healthcare almost every year. Some of these are game changers, optimizing workflow and efficiency for physicians and staff. It's hard to stay abreast of all the changes while also managing practice.

Wouldn't it be nice if technology companies - especially those that work with many clients that utilize your EMR - communicated with you on an ongoing basis about your technology as well as the best new technologies adopted by their clients? That's exactly what we do in our technology reviews.

If you're looking for a defined, strategic and tactically aligned IT plan, this is it. Actually, this is better. We don't just do this once — our technology reviews happen twice every year.

### Confidence Score:

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We've never heard of technology review.

We review emerging technology all the time.

### 3. What preventative measures are taking place in your clinic that are aimed at decreasing EMR problems? For instance, do you have scheduled reboots of workstations and servers? Does someone monitor the age of your computers, and look for drivers and software updates?

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. EMR servers sometimes need to be rebooted. The best thing is to do it proactively so it happens at downtimes for the clinic. In the same way, software and drivers need to be updated on a schedule. And computers themselves—it's too painful to buy all new computers all at once, so it's best to have a plan to replace a few every year.

To optimize performance, minimize downtime, and turn your EMR into a well-oiled machine for your physicians and staff, it takes preventive planning and ongoing execution of the plan.

#### Proactive Score:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

We're reactive.  
We just fix what's  
broken right now.

We're forward thinking,  
monitoring and correcting  
everything we can.

### 4. Do you have a scheduled appointment time where a technical account manager calls you and reviews all of your tickets?

You've heard the quip: "What doesn't get measured can't be managed." Forward thinking administrators like to proactively correct problems that crop up in their workflow. Are there trends in your office for certain problems that happen all the time? If there are, then it's worth the effort—and maybe even the expense—to correct problems so they don't keep happening.

#### Proactive Score:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

We only stir  
the boiling pot.

We're forward  
thinking, monitoring  
and correcting everything.

### 5. How many tickets have been opened and closed in the past three months?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Amazement Score:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I can't believe we call  
support so much.

I actually thought we  
called support more.

### 6. How much time do you and/or your staff spend working on IT issues in the business? Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

#### IT Support Satisfaction Score:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please get me some help  
so I can do my job.

We have to spend some time  
working with IT, but it's not a  
problem.

7. Does the practice employ an IT staff person? Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### Staffing Overhead Score:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

We do. It's amazing though, our worst IT problems happen when she's on vacation.

We outsource our IT support. The help we need is always a phone call or email away.

### 8. If you have a local server, how old is it? Is it still under warranty or a support contract?

There are certainly pros and cons to having a local server versus being hosted. Often people think that having a local server is more stable. However, most EMR's are very internet dependent, and performance is almost the same to be hosted as it is to have a local server.

Why is it better to be hosted? Consider this: as a local server ages performance can decline. The average life cycle of the server is approximately 3 to 4 years. Yes, there are instances where servers last much longer. But just like automobiles, the older a piece of equipment gets the more prone it is to failure. If your server were to go down unexpectedly it can take several days to restore functionality. Even if you have a warranty or service contract, unless you have another server in your office already loaded with a copy of your data, you will experience significant downtime if your main server goes down.

Can you imagine going several days without your EMR? That's a pretty scary thought. But spend thousands to upgrade a server while it's still working? That's almost as bad. Still, it's the only way to avoid a catastrophic event ... unless you host your servers.

### Local Server Age Score:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Our server is 4+ years old.

Our server is 2-3 years old.

Our server is 0-2 years old.

### 9. When was the last time someone tested your disaster recovery plan? Did it work successfully? Did you test the restored data in all parts of your EMR and verify that it was complete and up to date?

Many administrators think that having backups is the same thing as a disaster recovery plan. Sure, you can easily get external drives and software tells you that backups were completed successfully. But what if it didn't work?

What if there were files that were left out that could make the difference of restoring your database fully? What if it was not possible to restore all of the digital images from your database?

It's important to restore your backups once a year and have your staff review and check to make sure everything is there. Remember, a disaster recovery plan only helps you if your data is really there.

### Peace of Mind Score:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Is our backup still working? Let me go check.

We just restored a backup, and everything checked out just fine.

## 10. Do your physicians have all the tools they need to work anywhere, all with just one login, all with absolute security?

It's not uncommon to have remote access to your EHR. Most companies provide this. Sometimes this is all your physicians need. Other times they need all the tools on their office workstation: a word processor, a spreadsheet application, their work calendar, access to the PACS server, etc.

"How can I get my physicians and staff the tools they need?" It might surprise you, but this isn't the best question to ask. A better question is this: "Is there a way to give my doctors their entire portfolio of desktop tools in a way that doesn't compromise HIPAA security but is still cost effective?"

### Secure Remote Connection Score:

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We can connect to our EHR, but nothing else. I hope it's secure. It better be... but I've never thought about it.

All of our tools are accessible—even our Microsoft office software is on our cloud desktop, all with 128-bit encryption.

## DO YOU HAVE THE BEST EMR SETUP AND SUPPORT FROM YOUR IT COMPANY?

To learn more about how our turn-key packages optimize EMR's so your doctors can focus on their patients, feel free to give us a call.

