

# DEMAND FOR INFORMATION INTEGRITY IN HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT

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## Abstract

Information Integrity is the dependability and trustworthiness of information. Its determinants are accuracy, consistency and reliability of information. The paper researches the demand for Information Integrity in healthcare management and suggests a systems approach to reduction of errors in medical systems. The paper begins by observing the enormity of medical errors and requirement for informational view of healthcare process for their reduction. For this healthcare system and its components can be modeled as open systems. This sets the basis for developing an *IS* view of a healthcare system and presents it as a network of healthcare information variables. This leads to a closed loop information and control system model of which healthcare process is an integral part and results in a generic business process *IS* view of the healthcare process. Effective patient care calls for efficient and economic information processing under this business *IS* view. This *IS* is a multiple stage decision process comprising stages from initial healthcare problem recognition (goal setting) to delivery of customized healthcare service (information) decision for control implementation. This emphasizes the information gathering (i.e. originating) and processing nature of the *IS*. Of yet greater implication is the reality that at each decision stage these information originating and processing activities are impacted by the system environmental factors of 5“C”s, namely, complexity, change, communication, conversion, and corruption. While on one hand, this results in uncertainty at all *IS* levels leading to errors in information processed from stage to stage and, thereby, to loss of Information Integrity, on the other hand, it makes the business *IS* view - here the healthcare *IS* view - a continuous information originating and processing situation characterized by information errors. In other words, problem transforms from that of dealing with medical errors to that of (dealing with) information errors in medical settings. For effective patient care (that is for effective business) this presents the Information Integrity as a fundamental requirement for competitive business advantage.

