

**Nursing 4210: Health: Transitions**

Learning Activity #10  
**Nursing Informatics, Data Management  
& Health Information Systems**

**Overview:**

Nursing Informatics is a term that has existed for close to thirty years now, but is still in its' infancy. In parallel, the structuring of a electronic health information system in Canada has been in the planning stages for several years now, but is still being brain-stormed, planned, and created. Data on some health issues and statuses have been gathered, but much is not. The existing data quite often is too cumbersome to be easily analyzed and shared.

“Better health information is essential if we are to have an integrated health system. A system that enables us to identify emerging needs or vulnerable populations, so that preventive actions can be taken. A system that effectively links the full range of services - from prevention to primary care, to hospital care, to home or community care, to mental health services, to long term and palliative care. A system that enables us to track how individuals navigate their way through these services, and with what results.

Better health information is essential if we are to have a system premised on evidence based decision making. A system that integrates health care knowledge with information technology to promote learning and innovation. A system where “best practices” are identified and shared. A system where useful data are gathered, transformed into information, and made available in a timely way to those who require it.

And better health information is essential if we are to have a system that empowers patients by giving them a greater role in shaping the health system, understanding their options, making choices, and in maintaining and improving their own health,”  
(CIHI, 2000, p. 1).

The current initiatives in health information are also focused on collecting data related to how Canadians fare in enjoying the social determinants of health. As well, they ask how can each health authority ensure that their unique communities and populations enjoy vibrant health in an integrated, evidenced-based way?

## Ends In View

This learning activity is intended to give the learner the opportunity to:

1. Explore the role of the nurse in building the informatics component of nursing, and of helping to develop the new Canadian health information system.
2. Recognize the process of developing the Canadian health information system and why it is important is to the nursing profession.
3. Understand the relationship between a comprehensive electronic health information system and integrated, evidence-based health care in Canada.

## In Preparation

1. **Read:** CIHI. (2002). *Roadmap Initiative: Year 3 in Review*. Ottawa  
[http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/en/downloads/profile\\_roadmap\\_e\\_year3\\_review.pdf](http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/en/downloads/profile_roadmap_e_year3_review.pdf)
2. **Read:** Health Chief Information Officer Council. (2002). *Information for Health: A strategic plan for Health Information Management, 2002/3 to 2006/7*. Victoria.  
[http://www.premiersforhealth.ca/pdf/homecare\\_eng.pdf](http://www.premiersforhealth.ca/pdf/homecare_eng.pdf)

## In Practice

1. Participate in the forum discussion related to the emerging Canadian health information system and its' implications for Nurses and Nursing Informatics.
2. In the attached table list give details on the ideal Health Information system for Canadians (from YOUR perspective).
3. In your journal, address this question, "How do the issues of privilege, access and literacy affect the ability of Canadians to reap the benefits of the proposed health information system?"
4. On the worksheet, discuss the ethical and confidentiality issues related to an electronic health information system. What is your role as a nurse related to these issues?
5. Include your thoughts on how this envisioned health information system promote evidenced based practice in Canadian health care, on the worksheet as well.

## **In Reflection**

1. How will the proposed Health Information system affect your nursing practice?
2. How can you prepare yourself to use this system confidently in your practice?

## **References**

CIHI. (2002). *Roadmap Initiative: Year 3 in Review*. Ottawa: CIHI  
[http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/en/downloads/profile\\_roadmap\\_e\\_year3\\_review.pdf](http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/en/downloads/profile_roadmap_e_year3_review.pdf)

Health Chief Information Officer Council. (2002). *Information for Health: A strategic plan for Health Information Management, 2002/3 to 2006/7*. Victoria: Ministry of Health  
[http://www.premiersforhealth.ca/pdf/homecare\\_eng.pdf](http://www.premiersforhealth.ca/pdf/homecare_eng.pdf)

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An Ideal Health Information System for Canada

<b>Factors to Consider</b>	<b>Health Information System Characteristics</b>
Client Personal Information	
Use of In-home Technologies	
System Capabilities	
New Models for Home/Community Care	
Integration of All Levels of Care	
Evidenced Based Practice	

## WORKSHEET #4 Learning Activity 10

Discuss the ethical and confidentiality issues related to an electronic health information system.

What is your role as a nurse related to these issues?

Include your thoughts on how this envisioned health information system promote evidenced based practice in Canadian health care as well.