Critical Thinking Is Critical

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Critical Thinking Nursing Definition
In nursing, critical thinking for clinical decision making is the ability to think in a systematic and logical manner with openness to question and reflect on the reasoning process that can be absorbed by providers and health IT vendors.1

Why Implement an EMR:
Enhance positive patient outcomes including medical error prevention
• Remove non-value added activities
• Improve communication
• Add valuable timely data reporting and results
• Support the integration of care
• Promote Clinical Transformation efforts

EMR Definition
The FDA defines an electronic health record “as any combination of text, graphics data, audio, pictorial or other information represented in digital form that is created, modified, maintained, archived, retrieved or distributed by a computer system.”2

Why Have They Done to Us?
• Increase in systems changes
• Lack of end user testing or usability
• Communication without education
• Optimization before stabilization
• Multiple system changes

What Have We Done to Us?
• Providers allowed to customize preferences which led to lack of compliance with regulatory requirements, such as Core Measures metrics.
• Lack of end user testing leads to rework as those who do the job know best how to do the job.

The Obvious
National Coordinator for health IT EMR Implementation “Requires a delicate balance between the urgency to modernize and the pace of change that can be absorbed by providers and health IT vendors.”

Health IT and Patient Safety
• It is widely believed that health IT, when designed, implemented and used appropriately, can be a positive enabler to transform the way care is delivered.
• Designed and applied inappropriately, health IT can add an additional layer of complexity to the already complex delivery of health care which can lead to unintended adverse consequences.

Healthcare and Patient Safety
When it comes to healthcare and patient safety, it’s important to understand the unintended consequences of implementing health IT. Here are some of the risks and challenges:

1. **Provider Fatigue**
   - Multiple system changes can lead to provider fatigue, reducing their ability to focus on patient care.
   - Lack of end user testing or usability can further exacerbate this issue.

2. **System Integration Issues**
   - When multiple systems are integrated, there can be compatibility issues that can lead to errors and delays in care.
   - Communication without education can lead to confusion and misinterpretation of data.

3. **Security Concerns**
   - Health IT systems can be a target for cyber threats, putting patient data at risk.
   - Compliance with regulatory requirements, such as Core Measures, requires careful consideration to avoid unintended consequences.

4. **Clinical Decision Support Tool**
   - Computer alerts can be beneficial, but when not designed and applied appropriately, they can lead to unintended adverse consequences.

5. **User Experience**
   - If the user experience is not designed with the end user in mind, it can lead to errors and delays in care.

Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that includes training, education, and ongoing evaluation of the system's impact on patient care.

Critical Thinking in Nursing
Critical thinking in nursing is the ability to think in a systematic and logical manner with openness to question and reflect on the reasoning process that can be absorbed by providers and health IT vendors.1

We can support this statement by considering the following:

1. **Enhance Positive Patient Outcomes**
   - Enhance positive patient outcomes including medical error prevention
   - Remove non-value added activities
   - Improve communication
   - Add valuable timely data reporting and results
   - Support the integration of care
   - Promote Clinical Transformation efforts

2. **Simplify Clinical Decision Support**
   - Computer alerts can be beneficial, but when not designed and applied appropriately, they can lead to unintended adverse consequences.

3. **Encourage Clinical Reasoning**
   - Encourage clinical reasoning and enable nurses to work with the knowledge and skills they already have.

4. **Improve Clinical Practice**
   - Encourage nurses to think critically and make informed decisions.

By fostering an environment that supports critical thinking, healthcare providers can work together to improve patient outcomes and ensure safe and effective care.