

POSTER ABSTRACTS

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Web-based Dx/Procedure Frequency Plot Generator

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Background: In order to probe for practice and/or data differences resulting from the gradual clinic-by-clinic rollout of a new clinical information system (EPIC) we built a browser-based application that generates time series plots of individual diagnosis and procedure code frequencies by clinic over time. The application allows investigators and programmers to check for discernible differences in the frequency with which diagnoses and procedures are coded at clinics pre- and post-EPIC rollout, and compare these to clinics that have not yet implemented EPIC.

Methods: SAS outpatient encounter data were summarized by code, month, and clinic. These summarized data were fed into a server database. We then built a browser-based interface by which users can select codes clinics, and dates of interest, and generate lineplots of selected code/clinic frequencies. The web server application uses asp.net, the lineplots are displayed using SAS Institute's SAS/Graph ActiveX control.

Results: The lineplots generated by the tool are very revealing of the variability and trend of code frequencies over time at GHC clinics. There is little evidence thus far of precipitous differences in code frequencies over time, although the EPIC data are only now starting to become available.¹

Conclusions: Investigators and programmers will be able to use this tool to explore the extent to which the switch to EPIC has affected the data, and to visualize time trends in outpatient encounter coding generally.

¹ Note to reviewers—by the time of the conference, we should have more definitive statements about tool usage and findings.