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Spectrum of tablet computer use by medical students and residents at an academic medical center

BACKGROUND The value of tablet computer use in medical education is an area of considerable interest, with some medical schools integrating tablet computers into their preclinical curriculum. This study was conducted to investigate how medical students and residents use tablet computers at SIU-SOM. METHODS An anonymous online questionnaire was shared with the medical students and residents at SIU-SOM in July and August of 2012. RESULTS There were 76 medical student and 66 resident/fellow responses to this survey. Slightly over 50% of respondents used a tablet computer, and 40% used a tablet computer one or more times daily. Residents/fellows were more likely to use tablet computers several times daily than medical students (32% vs 20%, $p = 0.035$). Residents were more likely than students to use a tablet computer to access an electronic medical record (41% vs 21%, $p = 0.010$), review radiology images (27% vs 12%, $p = 0.019$), and enter patient care orders (26% vs 3%, $p < 0.001$). CONCLUSIONS These results suggest that medical students and residents use tablet computers frequently, and for a variety of educational and clinical tasks. Residents are more likely to use tablet computers for direct patient care tasks.

SPECTRUM OF TABLET COMPUTER USE BY MEDICAL STUDENTS AND RESIDENTS AT AN ACADEMIC MEDICAL CENTER

By Robert Robinson, MD, MS, FACP | SIU School of Medicine | Department of Internal Medicine

BACKGROUND

The value of tablet computer use in medical education is an area of considerable interest, with some medical schools integrating tablet computers into their preclinical curriculum. This study was conducted to investigate how medical students and residents use tablet computers at SIU-SOM.

METHODS

An anonymous online questionnaire shared with the medical students and residents at SIU-SOM in July and August of 2012.

RESULTS

There were 76 medical student and 66 resident/fellow responses to this survey. Slightly over 50% of respondents used a tablet computer, and 40% used a tablet computer one or more times daily. Residents/fellows were more likely to use tablet computers several times daily than medical students (32% vs 20%, $p = 0.035$). Residents were more likely than students to use a tablet computer to access an electronic medical record (41% vs 21%, $p = 0.010$), review radiology images (27% vs 12%, $p = 0.019$), and enter patient care orders (26% vs 3%, $p < 0.001$).

CONCLUSIONS

These results suggest that medical students and residents use tablet computers frequently, and for a variety of educational and clinical tasks. Residents are more likely to use tablet computers for direct patient care tasks.

Tablet computer use by physicians in training at SIU-SOM

	Medical Students	Residents & Fellows
Total respondents	76	66
Use a tablet computer	39 (51%)	33 (50%)
Use an iPad	35 (46%)	27 (41%)
Use an Android Tablet	4 (5%)	6 (9%)
Use medical apps	35 (46%)	33 (50%)
Several times daily	15 (20%)	21 (32%)*
Daily	10 (13%)	11 (17%)
Weekly	10 (13%)	1 (2%)
Monthly	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Never	41 (54%)	33 (50%)*

How physicians in training use tablet computers at SIU-SOM

