The use of mobile technologies in healthcare continues to grow, with staff accessing data on their own devices.

GRAPEVINE, Texas — The use of mobile technologies in healthcare continues to grow, and staff isn’t just accessing data on employer-provided devices.

In fact, the BYOD — bring your own device — movement is “here and it’s here to stay,” said Marc Kohli, MD, of Indiana University School of Medicine. Eighty-one percent of workers overall use a personal device to access work information. That rises to 84 percent among healthcare workers, he said, speaking at a SIIM 2013 session.

“This has really led to a culture shift to where [organizations] are no longer trying to secure systems, but secure the information in the systems,” Kohli said.

To address these security concerns, many organizations are developing mobile device security standards. And those that don’t yet, will soon, he added. These policies address items such as passcode standards (how many characters and how long the device is accessible once logged in), intrusion prevention (how many times someone can try the wrong passcode before getting locked out), and data encryption on the device.

The good news, he said, was there are quite a few third-party vendors helping standardize and control mobile access for organizations.

There’s no doubt mobile computing will “have a huge impact on our lives,” said George Shih, MD, MS, of Weill Cornell Medical College, also speaking at SIIM. In healthcare, about 62 percent of physicians are using tablets, and more than half of them are using them at the bedside.

Though iPhones and the Apple iOS platform seem to dominate with more medical apps, open source platforms like that of the Android devices will reign in the future. The open architecture of these systems allow for easier development of apps and sharing of health information, Shih said.

Mobile also holds promise in medical education, Kohli noted. For example, the University of Colorado purchased 34 iPads for their radiology residents. The devices were preloaded with textbook content, videos and other apps aimed at supporting their study.

University officials evaluated their program and found residents spent more time doing educational activities than they did before the introduction of the iPads, Kohli said. They had an easier time finding and accessing the information they needed.

“Tablets,” he noted, “are amazing content consumption devices.”

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