

The correctional community is facing pressure to change the way it manages inmate health care. Increases in cost efficiencies and quality of care are both recognized as necessary to respond to these pressures. Pressure for increased efficiency comes from front-line health care providers and records managers as well as from executives and policy makers inside and outside of the agency. In addition to the interests in efficiency, increased pressure for accountability and capability to comply with treatment and privacy requirements comes from agency executives, political leadership in the state, and inmate and health care advocates. To respond to these pressures more effective ways to capture, use, and manage information about inmates and the care they receive must be created. This chapter presents a set of ideal characteristics for an EHR implementation for DOCS together with a discussion of known benefits of an EHR. Each characteristic and benefit is then discussed in terms of the barriers to implementation identified in the analysis. Overcoming each barrier requires new investments of money and effort from DOCS. The recommendations provided in chapter 5 outline the nature of the investments required and a strategy moving forward.