

COKER IT ASSESSMENTS: WHAT'S INVOLVED?

By Chris Torregosa, Senior Manager | Coker Group

Information technology (IT) can help healthcare organizations produce higher quality care at lower costs, but if the systems are set up incorrectly or poorly designed, IT can lead to frustrations among physicians and staff, along with higher operating expenses. Healthcare organizations are constantly evolving through growth, new EMR initiatives, and overall technology innovations. It can be difficult for organizations to maintain stability and security in their IT infrastructure through all of these constant changes.

Assessing the value of information technology within your healthcare organization remains essential to the maintenance of an efficient, ever-improving, and growing healthcare organization. Coker understands your organizational IT needs and the continual challenges you face. We see your situations repeatedly in all types of organizations. Our team of professionals comes from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences, including healthcare chief information officers (CIOs), chief medical informatics officers (CMIOs), planners and project managers, clinical and financial experts, and technical designers, integrators, implementers, and troubleshooters. We can help you navigate the tumultuous terrain of IT to make wise healthcare IT solutions decisions that attain successful outcomes. We can assess your EMR and PM systems, network and infrastructure setup, organizational structure, IT operations and service levels, staff competencies, security vulnerabilities, and recommend effective improvements and solutions that will make a difference. Coker offers numerous IT assessment services, described below and as listed on our website:

- **IT Strategic and Tactical Planning**
Determine how to harmonize IT with your organizational strategic and tactical plans while defining required IT capabilities, priorities, timeline, and costs.
- **IT Needs Assessments and Gap Analysis**
Identify specific IT needs, how well those needs are being met, what is missing, and what is required.
- **IT Security Reviews, Remediation, and Monitoring**
A full security risk assessment involves pinpointing security threats and vulnerabilities in the IT infrastructure. Identify, address, reduce, and eliminate dangers and susceptibilities facing the organization. Define those IT components that must be monitored and managed 24/7. Determine what IT security monitoring tools, policies, and procedures are required to ensure a secure IT environment.
- **IT Infrastructure**
Assess infrastructure capabilities including data and voice networks, hardware, software, databases, operating systems, and upgrade options and costs.

- **IT Vendor/System Selection and Contract Negotiations**
Vet IT vendors and systems based on your organization's needs. Efficiently evaluate, select, and negotiate contracts for new or replacement IT systems.
- **IT System Integration**
Evaluate your IT system's "interoperability" and determine how existing IT systems can securely and cost-effectively share data to meet business and clinical objectives.
- **Hospital and Ambulatory Systems -- EMR**
Consider which Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system is best suited to your organization and how your EMR system should interrelate with other hospital or ambulatory EMRs.
- **Practice Management Systems**
Determine which ambulatory practice management (PM) IT system is best for your organization, including considering the pros and cons of EMR implementation from the same vs. a different EMR vendor.
- **Population Health**
Assess your specific IT needs to manage patient populations and determine the missing IT components.
- **Business Intelligence/Data Analytics**
Address why an organization needs a business intelligence (BI)/data analytics system. What should you look for in selecting such a system? How does a BI/data analytics system work in a given organization's IT environment?
- **IT Department and Staff Assessment/IT Department Turnarounds**
Gauge the competency levels and effectiveness of your IT organization and staff. Learn how to organize and/or turn around an IT department to meet the demands of a growing organization.
- **ICD-10 Assessment and Remediation**
Optimize the use of ICD-10 codes and the IT systems that support them.
- **MIPS/MACRA Assessment and Remediation**
Measure where your organization is lacking in meeting MIPS/MACRA requirements. What needs to be done to succeed under MIPS/MACRA.
- **Cloud Computing**
Consider cloud computing and whether it is right for your organization. Define the pros and cons of cloud computing including potential service improvements and cost savings.
- **IT Technical Services**
Determine options for obtaining IT technical services including help desk services, PC and printer support, file server, operating system, database, and data and voice network support.
- **Disaster Planning and Recovery**
Identify areas to consider when developing your IT disaster planning and recovery strategy.

Coker assessments can be customized to meet a variety of organizational requirements and budgets. Contact Coker today for more information about how we help organizations transform through sound strategic business and technology consultation.

Please share your thoughts about IT Assessments and any questions you may have about how Coker Group can help your organization by contacting Chris Torregosa, Senior Manager at ctorregosa@cokergroup.com or by calling 678-832-2021.