Electronic Records Are Legal Nightmare

Houston, we have a problem. Politico reports that medical errors traced to the automation of the U.S. health care system are becoming a legal issue. This is because, unlike paper records, electronic records don’t always report what happened. For instance, the records of a patient with gangrene claimed her skin was normal. In addition, the record shows “repeated physician interviews with the patient – when she was comatose.”

In another case, all 3,000 pages of the patient’s electronic health record had the same date. As a result, the patient won a $10 million settlement. Politico notes that printouts of the electronic record can look different than what the doctor saw on the screen, leading judges to dismiss completely the doctor’s testimony.