EHR System Goes Dark for 20 Hours

Imagine yourself in the hospital ICU. Suddenly the entire electronic health record system shuts down. Now, as far as the hospital is concerned you have no medical history. They can’t see what the doctor ordered, they can’t see your last vital signs. They don’t know when you last got what medication. They don’t know if you’re scheduled for surgery, and all contact information with your family disappeared. The entire system is shut down.

That’s what happened to 13 Missouri hospitals for 20 hours in July. To keep notes and send orders, they reverted to paper. Proponents of EHRs says the systems are safe, but how safe would you feel if everything about you went dark for your doctors?

“BJC Healthcare loses computer service for 20 hours; 8 things to know,” Carrie Pallardy, Beckers Hospital Review, July 30, 2015.