

Let's Talk from the Faculty Lounge

Date: Aug 17th, 2020

Guest: Ling Chu, M.D.

Title: Associate CMIO, Assistant Professor GIM

Picture: <https://utswmed.org/doctors/ling-chu/>

Today's guest was Ling Chu from GIM and the Associate CMIO who shared her story in regards to how she became involved with attempting to make the EMR as practical and efficient as possible for the end user experience from her experience at Kaiser Permanente to her ongoing work here at UTSW.

Can you tell us a little about your journey?

1. Ling was initially a practicing pharmacist and in her last year decided to apply for medical school. This pharmacy background provided her a fundamental background and experience as the pharmacy sector has been using their own EMR for years.
2. Out of residency school Ling joined Kaiser Permanente who's focus was centered on operational efficiency and clinical excellence. This was a great starting point as the medical informatics field in healthcare was really beginning to take off.
3. Ling was recruited in 2002 at Kaiser to their EMR team. At the time the informatics team needed a clinician and someone who could interact with a variety of specialists and act as a liaison for the EMR group. Her primary goals have always been to make things "less painful" for the end user. In 2004, Kaiser adopted Epic in which at the time EPIC was still a bit small. Kaiser at the time was one of EPIC's biggest customers.
4. Ling's first big project on the Kaiser EMR team was centered on note writing and creating efficiency for the team of surgical specialists. The note writing tool had been rolled out, but there was some resistance on usage of the tool. Ling began the process of identifying what that resistance may be. What she found she would ultimately carry with her in all of her future work. She realized that there needed to be a balance between clinical needs and operational needs along with practical user ability for the end user.

Can you describe when you first started at UTSW how you worked on a local level?

1. Ling first started on a local level by presenting to her group (GIM) monthly. Ling would present a multitude of hacks and tips for the user inside of Epic. The suggestion was made to send one tip a week to the group known as the "Epic weekly hack". As time went on the informatics team would begin to send weekly hacks to a multitude of groups. This has evolved into the "Bits and Bytes" information.

Comment on how you have seen the EMR Physician Optimization group grow?

1. The group which is comprised of multiple DMIOs (Dept. medical informatics officer) are focused on making enhancements to workflows in various departments EMR by enabling and altering features that already exist inside of Epic. The team creates awareness and provides information to other departments who may be looking for a solution to a challenge that has already been solved elsewhere at UTSW. Example: Express Lanes for COVID
2. The DMIOs monthly bring challenges and opportunities to the informatics team which begin to try and resolve those barriers with solutions that exist inside of Epic.

The new thing you are leading is the “Lunchtime with Epic Hackers” can you tell us a bit more?

1. The upcoming event is an extension of the Epic Café that has been put on the past. We noticed a need for individual clinicians to come in and ask questions on specific items related to their specialty. We realized that not every process can be generalized. So, we provide the platform for those users to come in and ask their questions to the informatics team. We want to identify potential pain points and any challenges we may need to investigate.

What’s your favorite hack in the EMR?

1. Quick action
2. Quick buttons