Organizational change happens all around you but few can affect your daily tasks and workflows like the implementation of an electronic health record (EHR). As the healthcare industry has embraced the EHR as the industry standard for clinical documentation we find that the people who use the EHR on a daily basis are profoundly affected by the change and sometimes get stuck in the stages of change.

This guide sheet’s intended audience is those staff that are affected by an EHR implementation. Our intent is to provide you with some validation of the feelings you are having, help you understand why you are having those feelings, and show you that this is a process and there is hope at the end of this change process. Each staff person will go through the following stages but they may demonstrate them differently.

**STAGE 1:**
You have just been notified that your organization is implementing an EHR. If your organization has planned this change appropriately then you will probably be given this information in a meeting that announces the EHR, the project timeline, and the reasons this change is occurring. Communication is key! If you haven’t received complete information initiate a conversation with your change agent to get the details.

At this time you really need to talk about the change and communicate your perspective in a healthy and positive way. Avoid the negative office gossip person at this stage. Obtain all the facts about the change and form your own opinion based upon the goals of the project, how they align with the organization’s mission and values, and the potential positive impact on the patient’s you serve.
Realize that no project is perfect and each has its benefits and risks. Weigh them objectively.

Ask questions and seek out the organization change agent to obtain the information you need to form an educated opinion.

**STAGE 2:**
This stage will probably find you starting the change in real time. You will probably be getting training, reviewing workflows, and working with both the old and new the tasks simultaneously.

You will have a tendency to want to hold on to the old ways and identify all the flaws in the new system. Give it a chance.

This stage is pivotal in your movement into the positive stages of change. You have to try to tap into your creative mind and be part of the solutions when problems arise. Avoid pointing out all the problems without having some type of solution to offer. Participate in brainstorming or solutions teams to move the project and your transition forward.

At this time you are going to need a strong sense of direction from the change agents. You should be shown short term goals and successes that can offer a sense of accomplishment and keep your morale up.

**STAGE 3:**
This stage will find you embracing the change and building your personal skill set to further enhance the change.

Begin to set longer term goals both organizationally and personally. This will help you to track your own success and help identify those times when team success needs to be celebrated. You should be receiving project status updates less frequently from the change agents. You should have an organizational status update that identifies how the change has impacted the organization as a whole and those patients that you serve.

Change is never easy but it is the constant of our lives. Knowing what to expect will help to relieve some of the fear and uncertainty that goes along with change.