

And We're Off! Meaningful Use Notes from the CMS & ONC Press Briefing July 13, 2010

I was fortunate enough to be listening by phone to the historic (yes, historic) announcement of the final meaningful use rules by **Kathleen Sebelius**, Secretary HHS; **Don Berwick**, MD, new CMS Administrator; **David Blumenthal**, MD, national coordinator for health information technology at HHS; **Regina Benjamin**, MD, Surgeon General and a surprise speaker, **Regina Holliday**, artist and activist for patient rights.



Image via
Wikipedia

The memorable quotes I wrote down were:

Kathleen Sebelius: *"When electronic health records are well-designed and implemented correctly, they can be a powerful force for reducing errors, lowering costs, raising quality of care, and increasing doctor and patient satisfaction."* That is the best one-sentence description of "Why EHR?" I've ever heard.

Don Berwick: *"If it's (EHR) so good, why doesn't everyone use it? Because it's **HARD**."* There is a little slice of honesty that you won't get from most EHR vendors.

David Blumenthal: *"We are only as good in treating patients as the information we have."* Wow, an admission that could rock the medical world if we stopped and thought about it.

Regina Holliday: *“I will not stop until we all have the right see our own information.”* Regina’s Medical Advocacy Blog is [here](#). Her lauded mural **“73 Cents”** refers to how much per page she was told by the hospital medical records department she would have to pay to get a copy of her husband’s records while he was still in that hospital.

The Meat: Specifics of Stage 1 Meaningful Use (2011 and 2012)

Meaningful use includes both a core set and a menu set of objectives that are specific for eligible professionals and hospitals.

For Eligible Professionals (definition here), there are a total of 25 available meaningful use objectives. 20 of the objectives must be completed to qualify for an incentive payment. 15 are core objectives that are required, and the remaining 5 objectives may be chosen from the list of 10 menu set objectives.

For Hospitals, there are a total of 24 available meaningful use objectives. 14 are core objectives that are required, and the remaining 5 objectives may be chosen from the list of 10 menu set objectives.

Stage 1 (2011 – 2012) sets the baseline for electronic data capture and information sharing.

Stage 2 (est. 2013) and **Stage 3** (est. 2015) will continue to expand on this baseline and be developed through future rule making.

Summary Overview Of Meaningful Use

Objectives

(full article from New England Journal of Medicine **here**)

As I am sure you expect, there will be much more information to come.

