

Medicare News This Week: The 27.5% Cut, Meaningful Use Stage 2 Specifications, and Upcoming Webinars

This Week's Medicare News for Medical Practice Managers

- Vice Chair Gingrey (R-GA) “Confident” of SGR Fix Passing in Lame Duck Congress Session (jump to story)
- CMS Releases Stage 2 Meaningful Use Specification Sheets with Details on Each Measure (jump to story)
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Gingrey “Confident” Lame Duck Congress Will Pass SGR Fix.

Modern Healthcare (11/15, Subscription Publication) reports that Representative Phil Gingrey (R-GA), vice chair of the House Doctors Caucus said Wednesday that he is “pretty confident” Congress will “approve a one-year freeze in Medicare physician pay rates” during the lame duck session. This so-called “SGR patch” would put off a slated 27.5% cut to Medicare reimbursement rates. He said he believed “Congress would find the \$18 billion needed to offset the cost of a one-year payment freeze,” adding that “his caucus plans to focus next year on finding a replacement t the SGR and a way to pay the \$300 billion cost of permanently replacing it.”

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CMS Releases Stage 2 Meaningful Use Specification Sheets with Details on Each Measure

CMS has added Stage 2 meaningful use specification sheets for both eligible professionals (EPs) and for eligible hospitals and critical access hospitals (CAHs) to help them participate in Stage 2 of meaningful use in the Medicare and Medicaid Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Programs.

The new specification sheets can be found on the Stage 2 page of the EHR website. Each specification sheet includes the objective, measure, and exclusion for each core and menu objective, as well as a definition of terms, attestation requirements, additional information, and the corresponding standards and certification criteria.

You can view the specification sheets in two ways:

- **Use the Stage 2 Specification Sheet Table of Contents –** The Table of Contents lists all the core and menu objectives, with direct links to each individual measure specification sheet. The page contains a Table of Contents for both EPs and for eligible hospitals and CAHs.
- **Download ALL Stage 2 Specification Sheets –** Zip files containing PDFs of all of the core and menu objectives for EPs and for eligible hospitals and CAHs are available for download on the page.

Reminder: The earliest that the Stage 2 criteria will be effective is in fiscal year 2014 for eligible hospitals and CAHs or calendar year 2014 for EPs. All providers must achieve meaningful use under the Stage 1 criteria before moving to Stage 2.

Want more information about the EHR Incentive Programs?

Make sure to visit the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs website for the latest news and updates on the EHR Incentive Programs.

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Information on Two Upcoming Webinars from CMS

National Medicare Training Program Update Webinar on Tuesday, November 20.

Attendees will hear information on:

- Flu Vaccine
- Plan Finder

- Innovations Center
- Enrollment Opportunities for People Affected by Hurricane Sandy
- Pharmacy & Provider Access During Federal Disasters and Other Public Health Emergencies

When: *Tuesday, November 20, 2012*

Time: *2:30-3:30 p.m., ET*

Call-In Number: *877-251-0301*

Conference ID: *90024799*

Webinar ID: *<https://webinar.cms.hhs.gov/nmtpnov12/>*

Make Your Community a Source of Health and Wellness – Establishing a Health Ministry in Your Community Webinar on Thursday, November 29.

Sue Heitmuller, Health Ministry Coordinator for Adventist HealthCare, will speak in-depth on how to lead communities through the process of faithfully establishing health ministries.

The presentation will be followed by a Question & Answer session.

When: *Thursday, November 29, 2012*

Time: *2:00-3:00 p.m., ET*

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