

# CMS Holds National Provider Calls for the Medicare EHR Incentive Program and EHR Attestation Q & A



Note: See my latest post on registering and attesting for the EHR Incentive Program [here](#).

CMS has announced two national calls for attestation.

**Tue May 3, 2-3:30pm ET (*for Eligible Hospitals*)**

**Thu May 5, 1:30-3pm ET (*for Eligible Professionals*)**

CMS is holding conference calls for eligible professionals (EPs), eligible hospitals, and critical access hospitals (CAHs) participating in the Medicare Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Program to provide information on the attestation process. Mark your calendars for one of the calls below.

- **Tuesday, May 3, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. ET** – Register to join this call if you are an eligible hospital or CAH who wants to learn more about the attestation process for the Medicare EHR Incentive Program.
- **Thursday, May 5, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. ET**– Register to join

this call if you are an EP who wants to learn more about the attestation process for the Medicare EHR Incentive Program.

### **What the Calls Will Cover**

- Path to Payment – Highlighting the steps you need to take to receive your incentive payment
- Walkthrough of the Attestation Process – Guiding you through CMS' web-based attestation system
- Troubleshooting – Helping you successfully attest through CMS' system
- Helpful Resources – Reviewing CMS' resources available on the EHR website
- Q&A – Answering your questions about the attestation process

### **Instructions on How to Register for a Call**

To register for these calls, take the following steps:

1. Visit either:
  - The [registration site](#) for the Tuesday, May 3 eligible hospital and CAH call. *Registration closes Monday, May 2 , 2:00 p.m. ET.*
  - The [registration site](#) for the Thursday, May 5 EP call. *Registration closes Wednesday, May 4, 1:30 p.m. ET.*
2. Fill in all required information and click "Register."
3. You will be taken to the "Thank you for registering" page and will receive a confirmation email shortly thereafter. Please save this page in case your server blocks the confirmation email. (If you do not receive the confirmation email, check your spam/junk mail filter as it may have been directed there.)
4. If assistance for hearing impaired services is needed, please email [medicare.ttt@palmettogba.com](mailto:medicare.ttt@palmettogba.com) no later than 3 business days before the call.

Prior to each call, presentation materials will be available in the Upcoming Events section of the [Spotlight Page](#) on the CMS [EHR website](#).

**Registration closes when all available space has been filled, or 24 hours before each call; no exceptions will be made, so please register early.**

## **How will I attest for the Medicare and Medicaid Incentive Programs?**

Medicare eligible professionals, eligible hospitals and critical access hospitals will have to demonstrate meaningful use through CMS' web-based [Registration and Attestation System](#). In the Medicare & Medicaid EHR Incentive Program Registration and Attestation System, providers will fill in numerators and denominators for the meaningful use objectives and clinical quality measures, indicate if they qualify for exclusions to specific objectives, and legally *attest* that they have successfully demonstrated meaningful use. A complete EHR system will provide a report of the numerators, denominators and other information. Then you will need to enter that data into our online Attestation System. Providers will qualify for a Medicare EHR incentive payment upon completing a **successful** online submission through the Attestation System—immediately after you submit your results you will see a summary of your attestation, and whether or not it was successful. The Attestation System for the Medicare EHR Incentive Program will open on April 18, 2011.

For the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program, providers will follow a similar process using their state's Attestation System. Check [here](#) to see states' scheduled launch dates for their Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs.

Do you have questions about the EHR Incentive Programs? Do you

want to find out if you are eligible, how much of an incentive payment you can earn, and learn more details about the program and what you need to do to qualify?

- Visit the [Path to Payment page](#) for a program overview
- Visit the [Meaningful Use page](#)

## When can I attest?

To attest for the Medicare EHR Incentive Program in your first year of participation, you will need to have met [meaningful use](#) for a consecutive 90-day reporting period. If your initial attestation fails, you can select a different 90-day reporting period that may partially overlap with a previously reported 90-day period. To attest for the Medicare EHR Incentive Program in subsequent years, you will need to have met meaningful use for a full year. Please note the reporting period for eligible professionals must fall within the calendar year, while the reporting period for eligible hospitals and critical access hospitals must fall during the Federal fiscal year.

April 18, 2011, is the earliest an eligible professional, eligible hospital or critical access hospital can attest that they have demonstrated meaningful use of certified EHR technology under the Medicare EHR Incentive Program.

Under the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program, providers can attest that they have adopted, implemented or upgraded certified EHR technology in their first year of participation to receive an incentive payment. Medicaid EHR Incentive Program participants should check with their state to find out when they can begin participation.

## What can I do now to prepare for attestation?

Visit the [Registration page](#) and get registered for the EHR Incentive Programs right now. If you haven't previously registered, you can complete the registration and attestation process at the same time.

Also, review the Attestation User Guides, which provide step-by-step instructions for login and completing attestation. You can find separate Attestation User Guides for eligible professionals and eligible hospitals in the [Resources](#) section below.

Finally, you can enter your information in our [Meaningful Use Attestation Calculator](#) prior to submitting your attestation to see if you would be able to meet all of the necessary measures to successfully demonstrate meaningful use and qualify for an EHR incentive payment.

## What will I need to login to the Attestation System?

If you are an eligible professional, you'll need:

- Your Type 1 National Provider Identifier (NPI)
- The same user ID and password you used to register

If you are working on behalf of an eligible hospital or critical access hospital, you'll need:

- An active National Provider Identifier (NPI)
- The same user ID and password you used to register
- An [EHR Certification Number](#) from Office of the National Coordinator
- If you did not register the facility, you'll need an Identity and Access Management system (I&A) Web user

account (User ID/Password) and be associated to the organization NPI, if you're a user working on behalf of an eligible hospital or critical access hospital. [Create a login](#) in the I&A System if you're working on behalf of an eligible hospital or Critical Access Hospital and don't have an I&A web user account.

## What is the CMS EHR Certification Number?

During attestation, CMS requires each eligible professional, eligible hospital and critical access hospital to provide a CMS EHR Certification ID or Number that identifies the certified EHR technology being used to demonstrate meaningful use. This unique CMS EHR Certification ID or Number can be obtained by entering the certified EHR technology product information at the Certified Health IT Product List (CHPL) on the ONC website [here](#).

**NOTE:** The ONC CHPL Product Number issued to your vendor for each certified technology is different than the CMS EHR Certification ID. Only a CMS EHR Certification ID obtained through the CHPL will be accepted at attestation.

Eligible professionals, eligible hospitals and critical access hospitals can obtain a CMS EHR Certification ID or Number by following these steps:

1. Go to the [ONC CHPL website](#).
2. Select your practice type by selecting the Ambulatory or Inpatient buttons.
3. Search for EHR Products by browsing all products, searching by product name or searching by criteria met.
4. Add product(s) to your cart to determine if your product(s) meet 100% of the CMS required criteria.
5. Request a CMS EHR Certification ID for CMS attestation.**NOTE:** The "Get CMS EHR Certification ID"

button will not be activated until the products in your cart meet 100% of the CMS required criteria. If the EHR product(s) do not meet 100% of the CMS required criteria to demonstrate Meaningful Use, a CMS EHR Certification ID will not be issued.

6. The CMS EHR Certification ID contains 15 alphanumeric characters.

## **I'm an Eligible Professional (EP). Can I designate a third party to register and/or attest on my behalf?**

In April 2011, CMS implemented functionality that allows an EP to designate a third party to register and attest on his or her behalf. To do so, users working on behalf of an EP must have an Identity and Access Management System (I&A) web user account (User ID/Password), and be associated to the EP's NPI. If you are working on behalf of an EP(s), and do not have an I&A web user account, please visit [I&A Security Check](#) to create one. States will not necessarily offer the same functionality for attestation in the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program. Check with your State to see what functionality will be offered.

## **When will I get paid?**

Incentive payments for the Medicare EHR Incentive Program will be made **approximately four to six weeks** after an eligible professional, eligible hospital or critical access hospital meets the program requirements and successfully attests they have demonstrated meaningful use of certified EHR technology. CMS expects that Medicare incentive payments will begin in May 2011. Payments will be held for eligible professionals until

the eligible professional meets the \$24,000 threshold in allowed charges.

Eligible hospitals and critical access hospitals attesting in April 2011 could receive their initial payments as early as May 2011. Final payment will be determined at the time of settling the hospital Medicare cost report.

Medicaid incentives will be paid by the states and are expected also to begin in 2011. States are required to issue incentive payments within 45 days of providers successfully attesting to having adopted, implemented or upgraded certified EHR technology during their first year of participation in the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program. Launch date for the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program varies by state, so the earliest date attestation can begin also varies by state. Several states have disbursed incentive payments as early as April 2011.

## **How will I get paid?**

Payments to Medicare providers will be made to the taxpayer identification number (TIN) you selected at the time you registered for the Medicare EHR Incentive Program.

CMS will deposit payment in the first bank account on file. It will appear on your bank statement as "EHR Incentive Payment"

If you receive payments for Medicare services via electronic funds transfer, you will receive Medicare EHR Incentive Program payment the same way. If you currently receive Medicare payments by paper check, you will also receive your first Medicare EHR Incentive Program payment by paper check.

**IMPORTANT:** Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs), carriers and fiscal intermediaries will not be making these payments. CMS has contracted with a Payment File Development Contractor to make these payments.



Have questions about your EHR incentive payment?

**DON'T: Call your MAC/carrier/fiscal intermediary with questions**

**DO:** Call the EHR Information Center

1-888-734-6433. TTY users should call 1-888-734-6563

Hours of Operation: 7:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. (Central Time)  
Monday through Friday, except federal holidays

**Why the payment amount may be less than you thought:** The Medicare & Medicaid EHR Incentive Program Registration and Attestation System contains a Status tab at the top which will contain the amount of the incentive payment, the amount of tax or nontax offsets applied, and the remittance advice reason code containing the reason for any reduction.

For those receiving paper checks, there will be a tear-off pay stub which identifies offsets made to the incentive payment.

**Where you can find more information about the offsets:** For more information about tax offsets, call the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at 1-800-829-3903.

For more information about non tax offsets, call the Department of the Treasury, Financial Management Service (FMS) at 1-800-304-3107.

## **Will CMS conduct audits?**

Any provider attesting to receive an EHR incentive payment for either the Medicare EHR Incentive Program or the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program potentially may be subject to an audit. Here's what you need to know to make sure you're prepared:

Overview of the CMS EHR Incentive Programs Audits

- All providers attesting to receive an EHR incentive payment for either Medicare or Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs should retain ALL relevant supporting documentation (in either paper or electronic format used in the completion of the Attestation Module responses). Documentation to support the attestation should be retained for six years post-attestation. Documentation to support payment calculations (such as cost report data) should continue to follow the current documentation retention processes.
- CMS, and its contractors, will perform audits on Medicare and dually-eligible (Medicare and Medicaid) providers.
- States, and their contractors, will perform audits on Medicaid providers.
- CMS and states will also manage appeals processes.

#### Preparing for an Audit

- To ensure you are prepared for a potential audit, save the supporting electronic or paper documentation that support your attestation. Also save the documentation to support your Clinical Quality Measures (CQMs). Hospitals should also maintain documentation to support their payment calculations.
- Upon audit, the documentation will be used to validate that the provided accurately attested and submitted CQMs, as well as to verify that the incentive payment was accurate.

#### Details of the Audits

- There are numerous pre-payment edit checks built into the EHR Incentive Programs' systems to detect inaccuracies in eligibility, reporting and payment.
- Post-payment audits will also be completed during the course of the EHR Incentive Programs.
- If, based on an audit, a provider is found to not be

eligible for an EHR incentive payment, the payment will be recouped.

- CMS will be implementing an appeals process for eligible professionals, eligible hospitals and critical access hospitals that participate in the Medicare EHR Incentive Program. More information about this process will be posted to the CMS Web site soon.
- States will implement appeals processes for the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program. For more information about these appeals, please contact your State Medicaid Agency.

## **Where can I find user guides and other resources?**

Below are step-by-step Attestation User Guides to help you attest for the Medicare EHR Incentive Program. You can also use our Attestation Worksheet, Meaningful Use Attestation Calculator, and educational webinar to help you prepare for and complete the attestation process:

- [Attestation User Guide for Eligible Hospitals](#)
- [Attestation User Guide for Medicare Eligible Professionals](#)
- [Meaningful Use Attestation Calculator \(version 1\)](#)
- [Electronic Specifications for clinical quality measures \(CQM\)](#)

**The Electronic Health Record (EHR) Information Center** is open to assist the EHR Provider Community with inquiries.

1-888-734-6433. TTY users should call 1-888-734-6563.

**EHR Information Center Hours of Operation:** 7:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. (Central Time) Monday through Friday, except federal holidays.

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# New HITECH Resource for Eligible Providers and Hospitals at the Virtual Extension Center

*Note: I get great pleasure in finding resources for my readers, and today I have a showstopper! Carol Flagg is co-owner of HITECH Answers and is visiting Manage My Practice to announce a free resource for eligible providers and hospitals.*

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For the past two years [HITECH Answers](#) has been a vendor neutral resource for education on details of the HITECH Act. In that time, we've amassed a significant library of recorded webinars for viewing, along with a body of exclusive white papers and research.

But the time for analyzing the HITECH Act has ended. Similar to the purpose served by the 62 Regional Extension Centers (RECs) , our goal is to support as much as we can the process of adoption of a certified EHR system that meets meaningful use criteria. Given the sheer number of health care providers needing significant help and guidance through this process, we have transitioned our existing web-based subscription model to function as a **Virtual Extension Center**.

This Virtual Extension Center, or VEC, supports health care providers and hospitals looking for education and analysis throughout the HITECH life cycle in a 100% virtual environment. In a nutshell, our VEC widens the education

circle and opportunity for all Eligible Professionals and Eligible Hospitals. We've also made membership to our VEC **completely free for EPs and EHs** for the entire life cycle of the HITECH Act.

## **So what, exactly, is the VEC? And how does it function?**

First and foremost, this newly created VEC houses all of the existing recorded training material and research accumulated over the past two years. This information is readily accessible upon members logging on to HITECH Answers. Here's what has been added to round out VEC membership:

- Meaningful Use for EPs and EHs "" Live webinar events hosted twice a month that focus specifically on the details for achieving Stage 1 meaningful use for EPs and EHs.
- Upcoming live web casts on tax implications for incentives for EPs and EHs, workflow, ICD-10 migration, HIPAA security assessment, the pros and cons of SaaS, EHR contract negotiation and more.
- Live web cast for our VEC members who are vendors and HIT consultants that address pressing topics and needs in conducting business in this industry.
- Attendance to live webcast interviews and presentations from leading national experts.
- Access to exclusive white papers and research found only in our VEC.
- Direct access to independent experts to help answers your specific questions.

An obvious large part of the VEC will be our **live events**. We debut our event offerings with these two important topics "" *Meaningful Use for Specialists* and *EHR Contract Negotiations*.

**Meaningful Use for Specialists "" Qualifying for CMS EHR**

## Incentives

**January 18, 2011, 7 pm EST**

**Event summary:** A first glance at the Stage 1 Core and Menu Set objectives makes sense for primary care, but what about specialists? How can Psychiatrists, Oncologists, Radiologists, Urologists, and other specialists meet the requirements and objectives outlined in CMS EHR Incentive Program? EPs that are specialists can still achieve the CMS incentives based on the flexibility that is incorporated into two primary areas: Menu Exclusions and Quality Measures.

## EHR Contract Negotiations: Q & A with William O'Toole, O'Toole Law Group

**January 25, 2011, 7 pm EST**

**Event summary:** The HITECH Act of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is driving new technology acquisitions unlike anything seen in the healthcare information technology (HIT) sector since Y2K. Specific terms and warranties in Electronic Health Record (EHR) agreements are absolutely essential for the protection of provider customers. Competent and experienced legal advice is extremely important. Get your questions answered in this special Q & A session.



You can visit our [Events Page](#) to learn more about these sessions.

And you can learn more about qualifying for a free membership at [Become A Member](#) or you can contact me at: [carol@hitechanswers.com](mailto:carol@hitechanswers.com).

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**Disclosure from Mary Pat: HITECH Answers sells my book on**

**their site, and I am a Consulting Expert to HITECH Answers.**