

New “One Patient” MU Rule Brings Relief



Last week, CMS published a new proposed rule for Meaningful (MU). This rule strives to “...align Meaningful Use (MU) Stage 1 and Stage 2 objectives and measures with the long-term proposals for Stage 3...”. In other words, make the program simpler and make it easier to achieve.

The proposed rule would simplify MU by:

- Reducing the overall number of objectives;
- Removing measures that have become redundant, duplicative or have reached wide-spread adoption;
- Allowing a 90 day reporting period in 2015 to accommodate the implementation of these proposed changes in 2015, and possibly of the greatest interest to medical practice,

- Remove the 5 percent threshold for Measure 2 from the EP Stage 2 Patient Electronic Access objective, **requiring that at least (only) 1 patient seen by the provider during the EHR reporting period views, downloads, or transmits his or her health information** to a third party.

This last one is extremely important as practices have spent much time and money trying to encourage patients to use their portals to fulfill the view/download/transmit requirement. As a patient, I understand this. I only use my PCP's portal a couple of times a year, so I invariably forget my user ID and password (yes, I do know there are programs to store and retrieve these for me, but that's a conversation for a totally different post) and it all ends up just being a big pain. My health is important to me, but I don't have reason to get on the portal on a regular basis, and practices are finding out that many patients just don't care to use the portal or don't have a need.

More light reading on the proposed rule is available **here** in the Federal Register.