

“How To” Implement the Medicare E-Prescribing Incentive Program

The Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA)

E-prescribing can greatly reduce adverse drug events and significantly streamline provider workflow for new prescriptions and refills, resulting in cost savings.

“How To”

Make sure your e-prescribing or EHR system is “qualified” and capable of performing ALL of the following functions:

- Generating a complete active medication list incorporating electronic data received from applicable pharmacy drug plan(s) if available.
- Selecting medications, printing prescriptions, electronically transmitting prescriptions (not faxing), and conducting required safety checks (safety checks include automated prompts that offer information on the drug being prescribed, potential inappropriate dose or route of administration, drug-drug interactions, allergy concerns, or warnings or cautions).
- Providing information related to the availability of lower cost, therapeutically appropriate alternatives (if any).
- Providing information on formulary or tiered formulary medications, patient eligibility, and authorization requirements received electronically from the patient’s drug plan.

What’s in It for Your Practice?

- Beginning January 1, 2009, Medicare will offer physician payment incentives of 2% for using e-prescribing in 2009 and 2010, with this amount declining slightly over the next three years.
- Those physicians who do not adopt e-prescribing for Medicare by 2012 will start seeing their Medicare payments incrementally reduced, up to 2% annually beginning in 2014.
 - The Secretary of Health and Human Services may make an exemption on a case-by-case basis if significant hardship can be demonstrated.
- Health plans offering Medicare Part D drug programs must begin supporting e-prescribing by May, 2009.
- The Secretary has the authority to update the codes of the electronic prescribing measure in the future. The legislation refers specifically to the electronic prescribing measure currently in the [2008 Physician Quality Reporting Initiative \(PQRI\) \(measure #125\)](#)

Is Your Practice Eligible?

- Providers billing according to the physician Medicare fee schedule are eligible. Providers that are part of an institution or outpatient clinic that bill according to the facility fee schedule are not eligible for the bonus. The Secretary will determine the number of electronically sent Medicare D prescriptions deemed sufficient for a provider to be considered eligible. This is expected to occur before December 31st, 2008. If the Secretary decides not to determine eligibility based on the number of electronically sent Medicare D prescriptions, then the requirements of the 2008 PQRI measure for electronic prescribing (measure 125) apply.

Resources

For more information on the Medicare incentive program:

- PQRI Toolkit --- http://www.cms.hhs.gov/PQRI/31_PQRIToolKit.asp
- MIPPA --- <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/media/press/release.asp?Counter=3200>

For more information on implementing e-prescribing in your practice:

- *Electronic Prescribing for the Medical Practice: Everything You Wanted to Know But Were Afraid to Ask*, Patricia L. Hale, PhD, MD, FACP, Editor
www.himss.org/bookstore and also http://www.himss.org/ASP/topics_eprescribing.asp

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