



October 24, 2011

EHR, Questions, Questions, Questions?

Question: Recently I have received the same question over and over again. “Can I just demonstrate meaningful use on my Medicare patients only?”

Answer: According to the Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Electronic Health Record Incentive Final Rule “...we are finalizing the policy that all meaningful use measures be calculated based on a provider’s entire patient population.”

To successfully demonstrate meaningful use, **providers must report on all patients, regardless of payer status.**

The government describes the program as “payer-neutral” as it applies to patients. Even though providers are required to pursue incentives under either Medicare or Medicaid, they must meaningfully use their EHR in a consistent manner, and report the same data, for their entire patient population—private and self-pay patients as well as those who are government-insured. While the descriptions of many of the meaningful use measures specify their respective numerators and denominators as a subset of the provider’s patients, these distinctions are based on factors totally independent of payer status.

It is interesting that the government can impose requirements related to patients for whom it is not the payer. This says something about the broader purpose behind the legislation.

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Go to my website to better understand EHR, the incentive payments and how this voluntary incentive program works.

http://www.iccom.org/index_files/Page2383.html

Edie Hofmann
Founder and CEO

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