



November 02, 2009 - Topic: Policy

CMS Updates Quality Reporting Initiative, E-Prescribing Program

CMS **recently announced** that it will update incentives for its physician quality reporting initiative and its electronic prescribing program under the 2010 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule, *Health Data Management* reports.

The agency plans to publish the final rule and open a public comment period on Nov. 25 (Goedert, *Health Data Management*, 11/2).

Quality Reporting

Under the updated rule, health care providers who participate in CMS' quality reporting initiative can earn bonus payments of 2%, up from the current level of 1.5%.

Group physician practices also will be eligible for the 2% bonus payments beginning in 2010, according to CMS.

CMS' new rule also expands quality reporting options and reporting periods. Beginning next year, health care providers can report their progress on an additional 30 quality measures and six measures groups (DerGurahian, *Modern Healthcare*, 11/2).

In addition, the new rule includes a reporting mechanism designed to promote electronic health record adoption. The rule calls for CMS to accept data on 10 quality measures submitted through qualified EHR systems. Beginning in 2010, CMS also will allow physicians to count their EHR-based submissions toward their eligibility for incentive payments.

E-Prescribing

CMS also announced that it plans to simplify reporting requirements for its e-prescribing initiative starting in 2010.

CMS plans to accomplish this by:

- Allowing group practices to qualify for 2010 e-prescribing incentive payments;
- Expanding eligibility for the e-prescribing program;
- Offering more choices for reporting e-prescribing measures; and
- Streamlining the reporting process for e-prescribing.

The agency noted that health care providers who are not e-prescribing by 2012 will face financial penalties (Monegain, *Healthcare IT News*, 11/2).

© 1998 - 2009. All Rights Reserved. iHealthBeat is published daily for the California HealthCare Foundation by The Advisory Board Company.