

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

EHR Incentive Pay: Follow This Advice to Avoid Forfeiting Your EHR Incentive Pay

Hint: CMS provides a simple calculator to tell you whether you're ready for attestation.

CMS reps have been diligent about shedding light on dozens of EHR-related issues during the agency's frequent open door forums, but you may still be scratching your head regarding other EHR issues. Check out the following FAQs from the CMS Web site to ease your confusion.

Which Vital Signs Must Be Recorded?

Question 1: One EHR meaningful use objective involves recording and charting "changes in vital signs." One Medicare provider asked CMS whether an eligible provider (EP) can claim an exclusion if he regularly records one or two of the vital signs, but not all three of them.

CMS's Advice: The only exclusions to this will be available to EPs who either see no patients age two or older, or those who believe that all three vital signs (height, weight, and blood pressure) of their patients have no relevance to their scope of practice. If that EP believes that just one or two of the vital signs are relevant to their scope of practice, then they must record all three to meet the measure objective "and successfully demonstrate meaningful use," CMS says at http://questions.cms.hhs.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/10593/p/21%2C26%2C11.

Know Who Can Register

Question 2: Must an EP register herself, or can someone else register or attest for her?

CMS's Advice: Someone else can register on the EP's behalf, assuming that person has an identity and access management system (I&A) web user account and be associated with the EP's NPI, CMS notes in an answer at http://questions.cms.hhs.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/10565/p/21%2C26%2C11.

Try CMS's Handy Calculator

Question 3: We're pretty sure that we have met the objectives for meaningful use so we can complete our attestation of the EHR program, but we aren't completely confident. Can someone at CMS check this for us?

CMS's Advice: You can use CMS's "meaningful use attestation calculator," which will show you if you've met all of the objectives and their associated measures for meaningful use before completing attestation for the EHR incentive program. You can find the calculator at www.cms.gov/apps/ehr/.