

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Healthcare IT: ONC Spearheads Effort to Improve Healthcare Technology

Demands for digital transparency continue to revolutionize healthcare.

Due to the ever changing trends, regulations, and liabilities affecting medicine daily, the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) has launched an initiative to reform and reenergize medical technology, making it more accessible to both providers and patients.

The rise in mobility and the general acceptance of EHR trends and apps have made it necessary for a review of the products on the market. With a new rule put into place, the ONC hopes to generate interest in the private sector for new innovations that are user-friendly and secure while also improving the transfer of patient data and information.

The proposed rule, entitled "ONC Health IT Certification Program: Enhanced Oversight and Accountability" has a three-part focus with plans to meet the needs and challenges of the developing technologies of the healthcare industry.

A 3-Part Initiative

The first section of the program deals with the ONC's "direct review" of IT products like EHRs and healthcare apps to ensure "public health and safety." The second point concerns possible issues with products allowing "enhanced oversight" by the ONC, and the group's, ONC-ACBs, that certify them. Lastly, a third part promotes the "greater transparency and accountability" needed in health IT to help users find the best products with the highest level of "performance and continued compliance."

Here's what it means to you: The main idea behind the proposed rule is to help providers and patients navigate the diverse selection of products, processes, and policies, ensuring the best technologies are available and easily accessible to all.

You Can Comment Now

The HHS is encouraging the healthcare community to weigh in on this new initiative until Monday May, 2 at 5 pm with comments, concerns, and ideas. Visit www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=HHS_FRDOC_0001-0620 to share your opinion.

Resource: For more on the "ONC Health IT Certification Program: Enhanced Oversight and Accountability" proposed rule, visit www.hhs.gov/about/news/2016/03/01/hhs-announces-proposed-rule-support-reliability-transparency-accountability-and-safety-certified.