

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

In other news ...

- What's "meaningful use?" That definition could be part of your holiday gift this year from CMS.

As most medical practices know, the government will offer annual bonuses for five years to physicians who participate in the federal healthcare programs (such as Medicare) that use meaningful electronic health records (EHRs). Over the five year period, this amount could total \$44,000.

Although many Part B providers are already using EHRs, it's the definition of "meaningful use" that's a bit sticky right now. Those practices who aren't demonstrating "meaningful use" may not be eligible for bonuses.

To that end, CMS intends to publish a formal definition by Dec. 31, according to an Oct. 15 press release from **David Blumenthal, MD**, the government's national coordinator for health information technology.

"We expect that any formal definition of 'meaningful use' must include specific activities health care providers need to undertake to qualify for incentives from the federal government," Blumenthal indicated. To read the complete statement, visit <http://healthit.hhs.gov>.