

Health Information Compliance Alert

Enforcement News: How Do You Feel About Your Cyber Health? NIST Wants to Know

Whether you are feeling stellar about your office IT health or you've just reported a cybersecurity breach, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) wants to hear from you.

"The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is currently leading a national research effort to address a serious problem facing not only the cybersecurity community, but all organizations regardless of sector, type or size," the NIST survey says. "There is little empirical research and evidence specifying exactly which cybersecurity strategies, policies and operational controls are actually effective in bolstering corporate IT defenses."

The survey, which is anonymous and runs until March 15, 2017, will be reviewed by a variety of health IT illuminati from government leaders to industry experts to academics in the field. NIST hopes to use your valuable input to impact policy changes, improve data quality, and highlight the importance of cybersecurity in healthcare.

"Enterprises and government organizations will be able to analyze and understand the extent and adequacy of their cyber defenses and gain actionable insights on where and how to bolster defenses," the NIST survey explains.

If you want to offer up your opinion on cybersecurity to NIST, visit http://csrc.nist.gov/news_events/cyberchain-survey.pdf.

New HHS Head Could Impact Health IT

U.S. House Representative Tom Price got the Senate approval he'd been waiting for. On Feb. 10, 2017 in a vote of 52 to 47 that fell within partisan lines, the Georgia native was approved to become the next HHS secretary.

Price, an Atlanta orthopaedist for over 20 years, will be the first physician to hold the top spot at HHS since Dr. Louis W. Sullivan in 1993 under Bush Sr.'s administration. Dr. Price has been a vocal critic of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and pay-for-performance initiatives under Medicare as chairman of the House Budget Committee and a member of the House Ways and Means Committee.

The jury is out on how much impact the dismantling of the ACA will have on health IT or if MACRA and its programs will be affected by the changes that Price has suggested. He hopes to put more focus on Medicaid with federal aid for low income patients in coming years versus building up Medicare and its programs.

Medicare Providers: Don't Miss the Last MU Attestation Deadline

CMS has extended its deadline for the last Meaningful Use (MU) attestation before it goes away for most Medicare providers under MACRA and the Quality Payment Program (QPP). Advancing Care Information (ACI) is replacing MU as the technical component under the QPP, and CEHRT measures will be reported under it.

The original deadline to report 2016 measures was Feb. 28, 2017 but has been changed to Monday, March 13, 2017 at 11:59 p.m. E.T., a CMS release from Feb. 8, 2017 says.

Payment adjustments will be made for those that get their attestations in late as the hardship deadline has come and gone.

Medicaid and hospitals that utilize MU programs will not be impacted by the changes.

For the MU registration and attestation link, visit

<https://www.cms.gov/regulations-and-guidance/legislation/ehrincentiveprograms/registrationandattestation.html>.