

Health Information Compliance Alert

Industry Notes

CMS Wants to Help You Benefit From PQRS

If you still haven't gotten on the PQRS train, now's the time to start collecting bonuses. That's the word from a recent how-to email that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) sent to providers last week outlining how to get started with the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS).

You must first confirm that you are an eligible professional who provides services paid under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule if so, those services are eligible for PQRS incentive payments, the agency notes.

Secondly, you'll select the appropriate reporting method that applies to you: Either registry reporting, claims reporting, EHR reporting, or via a qualified PQRS EHR data submission vendor. You'll then choose at least three individual measures or one measures group to report to CMS and submit them by the first quarter of 2014 for this year's bonuses.

For more on how to participate in the PQRS program, visit www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/PQRS/index.html.

E-Mail Gaffe Leads To Hospice HIPAA Breach Notification

A slip-up by a hospice employee is leading to some bad press for one hospice and worries for their patients whose PHI was exposed.

An unidentified employee at Pasadena, Md.-based Hospice of the Chesapeake e-mailed spreadsheets containing protected health information for more than 500 records to their own personal e-mail account so they could work from home, according to news reports. The data included names, ages, dates of service and diagnoses, but not Social Security numbers, dates of birth or financial data.

Hospice of the Chesapeake said it has reviewed its policies to ensure such a situation does not happen again, reports the Baltimore Sun. And the hospice notified those involved after it became aware of the potential breach in August.

Verify Your HHH MAC Info

It may seem like you just did it, but there's a good reason you need to verify your account information for Home Health & Hospice MAC Palmetto GBA again.

"Palmetto GBA and CMS are dedicated to ensuring that access to Medicare data is secure," the MAC says on its website. "To do this, CMS requires that all provider administrators verify access for all of the users on the account at least once a year for security purposes."

The Online Provider Services (OPS) system will prompt you to complete recertification of access, Palmetto explains.