

Health Information Compliance Alert

INDUSTRY NOTES: CMS Experiments With Transferring Claims Data To PHRs

My.Medicare.gov pages not 'true' PHRs, agency says.

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** is spending \$500,000 on testing new online consumer-oriented tools.

The new project will test "the feasibility of integrating Medicare claims history information with other Internet-based tools," which would allow Medicare beneficiaries to track their health care services, CMS announced on July 21.

The agency awarded six-month contracts to ViPS and Capstone Government Solutions, spending around \$500,000 on the project.

The two companies will test transferring Medicare claims data into personal health records. The project will also "evaluate how existing PHRs address security and privacy issues," CMS says.

Although Medicare benes are already able to obtain "personalized information about their Medicare benefits and services" on the My.Medicare.gov Web pages, the agency concedes that "these are not true personal health records." But users can update, save and keep a record of their prescription drug information.

"The PHR Feasibility Test is a component of a larger CMS PHR action plan," the agency notes.

For more information about the new project, go to www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/media/press/release.asp?Counter=1907.

In Other News...

Two major quality watchdog organizations are teaming up to make their quality information available to patients on the Internet.

The Ambulatory Care Quality Alliance (AQA) and the Hospital Quality Alliance (HQA) have created a new national Quality Alliance Steering Committee, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) announced on July 21.

The new steering committee will "work closely with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services " and AHRQ to expand more than six ongoing pilot projects that are collecting and reporting physician-quality data across different care settings.

The steering committee's key responsibility is to figure out the best way to expand the scope, speed and adoption of the AQA's and HQA's work, according to AHRQ.