

## **Federal Electronic Medical Records (EMR) Incentive Program**

Written by Administrator

Monday, 01 November 2010 14:48 - Last Updated Monday, 08 November 2010 22:21

---

### Federal Electronic Medical Records (EMR) Incentive Program

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides generous incentive payments for physicians, dentists and chiropractors that offer Medicare or Medicaid services and use a certified electronic health record system. Over \$17 billion is available. However, if an eligible practitioner wants to collect their full incentive they need to have their EMR solution fully operational in the next 24 months, beginning in 2011.

Eligible practitioners include doctors of medicine or osteopathy, doctors of dental surgery or dental medicine, doctors of podiatric medicine, doctors of optometry, and chiropractors. Each eligible practitioner can collect a maximum incentive of either \$44,000 from Medicare or \$63,750 from Medicaid. If an eligible practitioner qualifies for both incentives they may only participate in one program.

To qualify and receive the full incentive, each eligible practitioner must meet certain patient or billing thresholds. To collect the Medicaid incentive 30% of their patients must be on Medicaid (only 20% for pediatricians). For the Medicare incentive the eligible practitioner must have over \$24,000 in 'allowed charges' submitted to Medicare in a single calendar year in order to collect the full incentive. The eligible practitioner must also meet 20 'meaningful use' objectives before they can request their incentive payment.

### **Benefits**

Aside from the incentive, after implementing electronic medical records your practice will likely see improvements to your patient encounter workflow, more flexible access to patient charts throughout the practice, lower paper costs and the ability to e-prescribe to name just a few benefits.

### **Timing**

The government estimates that over 60% of physicians across the United States are eligible. However there is a relatively narrow window of time to take advantage of this opportunity. If you plan to collect the incentive it is best to start the process early since it will take up to nine months to plan, budget, select and implement your EMR solution and qualify for the incentive. A qualified EMR consultant can help you make the transition to the electronic medical records and

## Federal Electronic Medical Records (EMR) Incentive Program

Written by Administrator

Monday, 01 November 2010 14:48 - Last Updated Monday, 08 November 2010 22:21

---

help you collect your incentive.

### **Resources:**

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services:

[www.cms.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/01\\_Overview.asp](http://www.cms.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/01_Overview.asp)

Dallas/Fort Worth EMR Consultant: Stephen Cracknell, US Medical IT LLC: [www.usmedicalit.com](http://www.usmedicalit.com)