Welcome to the inaugural issue of Meaningful News from PaperFree Florida!

In the coming months, PaperFree Florida will bring you the latest information on health technology initiatives that impact healthcare providers who are working toward the meaningful use of EHRs and other health information technology. We look forward to sharing important updates and best practices with you!

We encourage you to visit our website, www.paperfreeflorida.org to learn more about us.

Meaningful Use Progress - At a Glance

According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), as of March 2012:

- 44,014 eligible professionals received $792 million in Medicare incentive payments;
- 911 hospitals received $1.6 billion in Medicare incentive payments;
- 29,931 eligible professionals received $628 million in Medicaid incentive payments; and
- 1,756 hospitals received nearly $1.5 billion in Medicaid incentive payments.

CMS has enhanced the EHR Information Center Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system with new self-service options. Users now have an increased number of options and services to access and review data easier than ever before. Providers can —

- obtain registration status
- acquire attestation status
- review payment information
- check progress towards meeting the $24,000 threshold amount

To access these new options —

- Dial (888) 734 6433
- Press 3 for Self Service
- Enter the authentication elements:
  - Individual National Provider Identifier (NPI)
  - last five digits of Tax Identification Number (TIN)
  - EHR registration ID

EHR Information Center Hours of Operation:
7:30 am – 6:30 pm (Central Time) Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. The general information and self-service options may be reached via IVR 24 hours a day, except during periods of planned system maintenance or upgrades.
Fear is the Achilles heel of all new EHR Implementations

While every practice functions uniquely, there is one consistent thread when it comes to successfully implementing an EHR. My experience in the field has taught me that it is extremely important for new adopters to take the necessary steps to diminish the fear that naturally comes with change.

3 Steps to eliminate staff fears about EHRs:

1. Understand your practice dynamics

It is vital that new adopters take the time to assess the attitudes of the clinicians and staff to determine whether everyone is onboard. Also, what is the current knowledge level and skill set of eventual users? Using an EHR will require you to change the way you do many things and who does what — what training gaps currently exist? And what are the functional needs of the practice for the EHR?

2. Engage in open and honest communication

Once the practice limitations have been identified and attitudes assessed, the next step is to prepare the practice to make this change by engaging all affected individuals in open and honest communication. Do not overlook your billing professionals as well. If an employee fails to understand how an EHR will affect the various components of the practice and patient care, fear and resentment will take hold. Also, establish realistic expectations. No EHR will be perfect — know this upfront and be honest about this with your personnel.

3. Reassure the staff with a safety net

Make sure everyone knows the paper charts are not going away never to be seen again. While you do not want your staff to remain reliant on knowing the chart is there and can be pulled, you do not want to totally yank that safety net. Let them know the charts are not going to be destroyed. When absolutely necessary, the chart can be retrieved but any new and ongoing documentation should occur in the EHR.

The key to change is to let go of fear

Do not let fear undermine your efforts and prevent your practice from making EHR implementation a reality. And remember, the PaperFree Florida team is here to help you overcome the hurdles that may prevent your practice from successfully incorporating EHRs into daily patient care.

Wendy’s Practical Tips for a Smooth Transition Away from Paper Charts

Try this method to wean your staff from paper charts

The first time an established patient comes into the office, pull the chart and affix a green sticker on it. Let the clinician have the chart for reference, but new documentation must be done in the EHR. The next time that same patient comes in, pull the chart and put a yellow sticker on it. Again the chart is available for reference, but documentation is done in the EHR. The third time the patient comes in, the chart is pulled again and a red sticker affixed. This is the last time the provider will access the chart. The fourth time the patient comes in, the chart will not be pulled. The green, yellow and red stickers will also help your staff determine what charts can be moved to storage. Again, the charts are not being destroyed and can be retrieved when absolutely necessary.

Some considerations when deciding how to format your chart notes templates in the EHR

If you dictate your notes now, your transcriptionist undoubtedly has created templates that you can use as a starting point. If you chart your notes by hand, you will already have a format preference. The key is to gather this information and include different versions if different providers have their own style. Come to a consensus as to a few agreed upon formats, for example new patient, follow up patient, consult, etc. Detail the elements to include in each. You do not need to come up with a template for every possible situation as that will become cumbersome and confusing. Just create the basics and then provide this information to your EHR vendor as early in the process as possible. Your vendor will know how best to incorporate what you want into a working template within the system. After you have been on the EHR for some time you can add more specialized templates as needed.
Check out these free online resources available to assist healthcare practitioners with the Meaningful Use of Health IT

**Guide to Reducing Unintended Consequences of Electronic Health Records**
This online resource produced by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality is designed to help providers and organizations anticipate, avoid, and address problems that can occur when implementing and using an EHR. It provides practical knowledge and resources. The Guide was developed with all types of health care organizations in mind — from large hospital systems to solo physician practices. To access the online guide go to [www.ucguide.org/index.html](http://www.ucguide.org/index.html)

**Meaningful Use OneSource**
This toolkit produced by HIMSS assists eligible healthcare providers and professionals in understanding Meaningful Use Stage 1 and Stage 2 requirements, timelines, the proposed rule, and much more. Also, this resource provides updates on federal and state regulations. This resource is available at [http://www.himss.org/ASP/topics_meaningfuluse.asp](http://www.himss.org/ASP/topics_meaningfuluse.asp)

**AMA E-Prescribing Learning Center**
The American Medical Association has launched the Zero-In Rx: E-Prescribing Learning Center, a web based resource for information on e-prescribing. The website includes a calculator for determining the cost savings for implementing e-prescribing in your practice, state e-prescribing initiatives and much more. Visit the AMA E-Prescribing Learning Center at [www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/eprescribing/home.shtml](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/eprescribing/home.shtml)

**Guide to Privacy and Security of Health Information**
The Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC) has created a guide to help physicians and their practice staff to understand the importance of privacy and security in the use of EHRs and how to conduct the best practices to safeguard health information. This handbook includes a guide for security risk analysis and management tips; working with EHR and health IT vendors; and the importance of privacy and security in meaningful use. The guide is available as a PDF and can be retrieved at [http://www.healthit.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/privacy/privacy-and-security-guide.pdf](http://www.healthit.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/privacy/privacy-and-security-guide.pdf)

### Meaningful News Incentive Corner

**What are the time frames for the Medicare Incentive Programs?**

**A.** **Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS)** incentive payments are available until 2014. Beginning in 2015, eligible professionals (EPs) who do not satisfactorily report PQRS measures will be subject to payment adjustments.

**B.** **E-Prescribe (eRx)** incentive payments are available until 2013. Beginning in 2012, payment adjustments will take effect for EPs who are not successful e-prescribers.

**C.** **Electronic Health Record (EHR)** Incentive Program begins in calendar year 2011. EPs can earn incentive payments for up to 5 years if they elect to receive their incentive payment through Medicare or up to 6 years if they elect to receive their incentive payment through Medicaid. However, no Medicare EHR incentive payments will be made to EPs whose first year of participation in the Medicare EHR Program is 2015 or later. Beginning in 2015, payment adjustments will take effect for Medicare fee-for-service EPs who cannot successfully demonstrate meaningful use of certified EHR technology. EPs can participate in the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program until 2016, and there are currently no penalties for not demonstrating meaningful use for Medicaid EPs.

Medicare eligible professionals may not earn incentives under the eRx and EHR incentive programs at the same time.
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Here are some upcoming dates and deadlines that may affect your bottom line.

May 17, 2012
Meaningful Use Workshop
The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) is hosting a Meaningful Use workshop in Tallahassee. This session is designed to provide information about the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program and how to achieve Meaningful Use. Visit the AHCA website at www.ahca.myflorida.com/medicaid/ehr/ for workshop details.

May 16, 22, 30, 2012
Meaningful Use Webinars
Learn more about the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program and how to achieve Meaningful Use through AHCA’s free webinars. All sessions include a Q&A period at the end. The webinar login details can be found at www.ahca.myflorida.com/medicaid/ehr/

May 21, 31, 2012
HIE Program Webinars
Join the Florida Health Information Exchange program staff for webinars designed to provide information to eligible professionals on the benefits of Direct Secure Messaging (DSM) and how to register for this free service. DSM is a secure e-mail service that allows providers to securely send and receive e-mail messages and attachments. These webinars cover the DSM registration process.

Registering for the webinar in advance is not required. A Q&A period will be held at the end of each session. Visit the Florida HIE Events page at www.florida-hie.net/events.html#events for more information.

June 30, 2012
E-Prescribing Hardship Exemption
In order to qualify for an e-prescribing hardship exemption for calendar year 2013, EPs who are not otherwise exempt from Medicare’s e-prescribing program must apply online for an exemption from the 2013 penalty via the CMS website on or before June 30, 2012. Without a hardship exemption, all EPs who are not exempt from the program are expected to be e-prescribing. If they are not, then they will be penalized by having their Medicare reimbursement rates reduced by 1.5% for all services rendered in 2013.

Hardship exemptions requests can only be submitted online via the CMS Quality Reporting Communication Support Page at www.qualitynet.org/portal/server.pt/community/communications_support_system/234

For more information on the 2012 eRx hardship exemption categories and the process for requesting an exemption, visit the CMS eRx Incentive Program page at http://www.cms.gov/ERxIncentive

June 30, 2012
5010 Implementation
The compliance date for upgrading to Version 5010 standards for electronic transactions was January 1, 2012. However, CMS’s Office of E-Health Standards and Services (OESS) has delayed enforcement until June 30, 2012, against any HIPAA-covered healthcare entity which has failed to switch to Version 5010 format. For more information, and to read the CMS announcement, visit the CMS ICD-10 website at www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD10/index.html?redirect=/ICD10/02b_Latest_News.asp

Meaningful News is produced by the PaperFree Florida Team

The PaperFree Florida program provides physicians with qualified, reliable assistance in selecting, implementing and achieving Meaningful Use of certified EHR Systems. We are uniquely positioned to serve as your trusted advocate and successfully steer your practice through all stages of the EHR transition process.

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