

PAYMENTS AND ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

One theme that has become quite clear through the enactment of health care reform legislation is that traditional fee-for-service reimbursement is going to become a thing of the past. Instead, healthcare providers will need to demonstrate that they provide high quality, cost-effective care in order to receive maximum reimbursement. This demonstration will require analytical tools that can only be provided through the adoption of electronic health records ("EHR").

To facilitate the adoption of EHR, Medicare is making available incentive payments of up to \$44,000 per *individual* provider over a five-year period, beginning in 2011. In order to receive an incentive payment, the provider must attest that he has demonstrated meaningful use of certified EHR technology for at least 90 consecutive days.

Before a provider can so attest, he must first register for the Medicare EHR incentive program by going to <https://ehrincentives.cms.gov/hitech/login.action>. There is no downside to registering now even if you have not yet acquired an EHR system. In addition, providers are eligible for the incentive program even if they have already implemented EHR technology.

On the state front, the New York eHealth Collaborative, a public-private partnership, offers EHR consulting services and has negotiated discounted pricing and terms with preferred vendors. More information about NYeC, including statewide educational seminars it will be presenting, can be found at www.nyehealth.org. ■

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