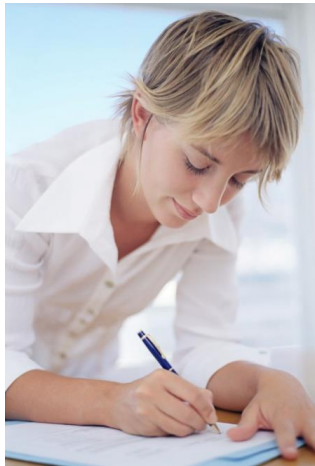# State-Regulated Payor Electronic Health Record Incentives Revised Program

Overview

Maryland is the first state to require State-regulated payors (payors) to provide incentives for certain health care providers to promote the adoption of electronic health records (EHRs). EHRs are longitudinal digital patient records that may include information such as demographics, progress notes, health problems, allergy and medication lists, vital signs, past medical history, immunizations, laboratory data and radiology reports. EHR adoption is an essential component of health care reform and can improve the quality of care, increase productivity and reduce health care costs. The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) established the State-Regulated EHR adoption incentive program (incentive program) in collaboration with the six largest private payors in the State: Aetna Inc.; CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield; Cigna HealthCare Mid-Atlantic; Coventry Health Care; Kaiser Permanente; and UnitedHealthcare, Mid Atlantic Region. The incentive program initially began in October 2011 and was revised on June 9, 2014 to align with the federal EHR incentive programs and to simplify some of the administrative requirements. The incentive program was also amended on November 24, 2016 to extend the program two years until December 31, 2018. The incentive is a one-time payment for an eligible practice per payor.

Practice Eligibility

Incentives are available to primary care practices in Maryland. Primary care practices include family, general, geriatric, internal medicine, pediatric, or gynecologic practices. Primary care practices led by a nurse practitioner providing health care in family practice, general practice, geriatric, internal medicine, pediatric medicine, or gynecologic practice also qualify.

Available Incentive

The incentive is a one-time cash payment unless an incentive of equivalent value, such as specific services, gain-sharing arrangements, rewards for quality and efficiency, in-kind payments, or other items or services that can be assigned a specific monetary value is agreed upon by the practice and the payor. Practices are eligible to receive up to $15,000 per practice per payor.

Incentive Calculation

The incentive is calculated at $25 for each fully-insured patient assigned to a provider within the primary care practice who is a member of the payor at the time a practice makes a request for the incentive payment. In cases where the payor does not assign patients to a provider within a primary care practice, the fully-insured patients enrolled with that payor who have been treated by the primary care practice in the last 24 months can be included in the incentive calculation. Payors may exclude patients from the incentive calculation who are enrolled in a self-insured health plan at the time of the payment request or who were previously included in another primary care practice's EHR adoption incentive calculation. Please contact the payor for details regarding its calculation and determination process.

How to Receive the Incentive

Meet Program Requirments

Submit Payment Request

Receive a Payment

Step 1 – Meeting Program Requirements

To qualify for the incentive, the practice must adopt a certified EHR[1] and demonstrate that it has either:

- Attested to the current Meaningful Use requirements under the Medicare or Medicaid EHR Incentive Program[2]; or

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[1] The EHR must be certified by an Authorized Testing and Certification Body designated by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology. For more, please visit: http://oncchpl.force.com/ehrcert?q=chpl.

[2] At least one physician or nurse practitioner within the primary care practice has achieved the meaningful use requirement under either the Medicaid or Medicare EHR Incentive program and has received confirmation of the attestation from the Centers for Medicare and

- Participates in any MHCC-approved patient centered medical home (PCMH) program and has achieved at least the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) PCMH level two recognition.[3]

Step 2 – Submit a Payment Request

To request the incentive payment, practices may submit an EHR Adoption Incentive Payment Request (payment request) to each payor with which it does business. Payors required to participate include: Aetna; CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield; Cigna HealthCare Mid-Atlantic; Coventry Health Care; Kaiser Permanente; and United Healthcare, Mid Atlantic Region. The payment request form is a standard form available for download on the MHCC website and includes the following information with supporting documentation:

- General practice information;
- The estimated number of patients on the practice's panel or the number of patients actively treated by the practice in the last 24 months;
- The name and version of the certified EHR in use at the practice;
- A copy of acceptance of attestation to Meaningful Use by at least one physician or nurse practitioner within the practice, or
- A copy of NCQA PCMH level two or greater recognition; and
- A signed attestation.
- The payment request may be submitted no later than **December 31, 2018**.

Step 3 – Receive a Payment

The payor may request additional information as necessary to determine the validity of a payment request. Payors will issue a payment request acknowledgement letter no later than 45 days of receiving a complete payment request and must process and pay in full the adoption incentive within 75 days of receiving a complete payment request. Additionally, the payor will provide written notification to the primary care practice regarding: 1) the amount of the EHR adoption incentive awarded; 2) the method of distribution of the EHR adoption incentive; and 3) the time period over which the incentive will be distributed.

Practices may request an accounting of its EHR adoption incentive, including the names of each patient included in the EHR adoption incentive calculation. The payor must provide the requested accounting to the primary care practices in a timely manner.

Resource Websites

State-Regulated Payor EHR Adoption Incentive Program:
http://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/hit/hit_ehr/hit_ehr_state_incentive.aspx

Maryland Meaningful Use Resource Center:
https://meaningfuluse.crisphealth.org

NCQA PCMH Recognition:
http://www.ncqa.org/Programs/Recognition/PatientCenteredMedicalHomePCMH.aspx

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Medicaid Services or the Maryland Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid).

[3] A primary care practice has received recognition from NCQA for meeting NCQA's 2011 or later standards for at least a level two PCMH recognition.