

# *Questions to Ask State Designated Management Service Organizations*

There are a number State Designated Management Service Organizations (MSOs), and it is important to select an MSO that meets the unique needs and goals of your practice. You can narrow the list of potential MSOs by learning about their service offerings. Listed below are questions to consider asking during the MSO selection process to learn more about their organization.

## ***General Questions***

1. Explain why a provider should choose to sign up with an MSO. What are the benefits to the provider?
2. What services does the MSO offer (e.g., electronic health record (EHR) implementation, assistance with meaningful use, practice transformation, quality reporting, workflow redesign, patient engagement, practice management, etc.)?
3. How long has the MSO been in business?
4. How many providers has the MSO worked with to date?
5. How many practices has the MSO assisted in successfully installing an EHR system?
6. What are the costs to receive services from an MSO? What is the pricing structure, (e.g., what does the monthly subscription include, what extra services are not included, etc.)?
7. Does the MSO provide support 24/7/365?
8. Does the MSO provide hardware (e.g., scanners, computers, monitors, tablets, etc.)?
9. Why should I choose this MSO over others?

## ***Questions about EHRs***

1. Which EHR product(s) does the MSO offer? Is the product certified by an ONC-Authorized Testing and Certification Body? Is the product certified as a Complete EHR?
2. Is the EHR product appropriate for a small or large sized practice?
3. What are the functionalities of the EHR?
4. Does the system have the ability to let the user customize screens or define specific fields? How are templates created? How difficult is it to create customizable reports?
5. Are EHR product interfaces available? What is the cost for each interface?
6. How is user authorization verified? Do audit trails show which users performed data input?
7. Can my current practice management system be integrated with the EHR system?
8. Is data entry set up to minimize keystrokes?
9. What is the implementation timeline, from signing the contract to full implementation and use? How is implementation training structured?
10. How are updates installed? Is there a cost for version upgrades?
11. Can the MSO arrange a demonstration of their EHR product?
12. Who owns the patient information?

### ***Questions about Meaningful Use***

13. How will the MSO help me achieve meaningful use?
14. How does the EHR system produce reports required for meaningful use?
15. Is the MSO associated with Maryland's Regional Extension Center (REC)?
16. What can the REC do for providers?
17. How do I receive EHR incentive payments?

### ***Questions about Other Service Offerings***

18. What kinds of support does the MSO provide to assist with practice transformation efforts, such as patient centered medical home (PCMH) programs and accountable care organization (ACOs)?
19. Does the MSO provide support with quality reporting for PCMH programs, ACOs, or other quality initiatives?
20. What kinds of support has the MSO provided to other practices in redesigning workflows for optimized use of health IT?
21. How does the MSO provide support to practices in expanding their patients' awareness and use of health IT?
22. Is the MSO connected to the statewide health information exchange, the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP)?