

Meaningful Use Attestation

CHEAT SHEET



CareCloud

Overview

General Questions

1. What is Meaningful Use?

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) are running a program that provides incentive payments to eligible healthcare providers who attest to “meaningful use” of an electronic health record (EHR) technology.

The program has two flavors – one focused on Medicare and one focused on Medicaid. This document provides an overview of the Medicare program.

Meaningful Use allows eligible providers to:

- Collect as much as \$44,000 during the course of five years;
- Avoid future financial penalties (i.e., lower reimbursement rates) that CMS will enforce against those without EHRs.

It’s important to note that this program and its rewards are intended for individual providers. Practices cannot participate – each doctor within a practice has to participate separately.

2. How do I get the money?

You need to:

- Confirm that CMS considers you an “eligible healthcare professional” (or hospital).
- Along the way, you’ll learn whether you’re eligible for one or both flavors of CMS’ program – Medicare and/or Medicaid. You need to pick one (again, this document assumes you pursue the Medicare one).

- Having confirmed your eligibility, **register for the program**. You don't need to have your EHR yet to do this. Nor does registering obligate you to buy one.
- Get to know the Meaningful Use criteria so you understand what is expected of you.
- **Buy a certified EHR**. (More on that in a moment.)
- Attest that you've met the Meaningful Use criteria. To do that, you must have used the EHR for 90 consecutive days during the calendar year, then completed an attestation form on the CMS website. CMS has a **calculator** that allows you to test whether you've successfully met the criteria needed to get paid.

Note that things change a bit after the first year in which you attest.

- In the first year you participate, as described above, you need to meaningfully use the EHR for 90 consecutive days in order to qualify for an incentive payment;
- In subsequent years, you must meaningfully use the EHR for the *entire calendar year*.

In other words, you can qualify for a 2012 incentive payment as long as you are meaningfully using your EHR by October 3rd – 90 days before year's end (though waiting until the last minute is not recommended). After meeting that deadline, you will need to meaningfully use the EHR *all year* from 2013-2016 to get the maximum amount of money.

3. How much money can I get?

How much money you get depends on two things: when you first attest and how long you participate in the program. It works like this:

- You get paid for each year you participate.
- The sooner you start, the more money you can get.
- The annual payment will be 75% of your Medicare-allowed charges up to a maximum cap.

This table shows the maximum payments for each year (left hand side) according to when you began meaningfully using an EHR (top side):

		When you start		
		CY 2012	CY 2013	CY 2014
When you get paid	2012	\$18K		
	2013	\$12K	\$15K	
	2014	\$8K	\$12K	\$12K
	2015	\$4K	\$8K	\$8K
	2016	\$2K	\$4K	\$4K
	TOTAL PAYMENT	\$44K	\$39K	\$24K

4. When and how will I get paid?

You will find out immediately whether your attestation has been successful. If your attestation is unsuccessful, CMS allows you to go back, check the information entered and edit it – or resubmit later.

- CMS promises payment 4-8 weeks after your successful attestation.
- CMS sends the money to the first bank account on file for the Taxpayer Identification Number you registered with. It will show up as “EHR Incentive Payment.”

5. Is it too late to attest for 2012 dollars?

No. You have until October 3rd to begin meaningfully using an EHR and complete the consecutive 90-day requirement that allows you to attest and receive 2012 dollars. That said, we don't recommend turning on your new EHR at the very last minute.

If you miss the October 3rd deadline, you can still get started for 2013.

6. What if I don't take part in the Meaningful Use program at all?

The last year to begin participation in the program is 2014.

If you decide to forego the program altogether... Well, we'll quote CMS for the bad news:

“For 2015 and later, Medicare eligible professionals who do not successfully demonstrate Meaningful Use will have a payment adjustment to their Medicare reimbursement. The payment reduction starts at 1% and increases each year that a Medicare eligible professional does not demonstrate Meaningful Use, to a maximum of 5%.”

CareCloud & Meaningful Use

1. Is CareCloud's EHR product, Charts, certified for Meaningful Use?

Absolutely. Charts has been fully ATCB certified for Meaningful Use attestation.

2. Have CareCloud Charts customers already received Meaningful Use payments?

Yes. Many CareCloud customers have already deployed Charts, used it meaningfully and **received their first payments from CMS.**

3. Can I implement Charts in time to attest for 2012 Meaningful Use dollars?

Yes. While implementation cycles can vary based on a practice's size and needs, those that sign on for Charts by August 15th should be up and running in time to begin the 90-day reporting period for 2012.

4. How will CareCloud help me to achieve Meaningful Use?

CareCloud will provide you with the certified technology needed to attest for Meaningful Use. As part of our training, we'll emphasize the features you'll need to use in support of that process.

While other vendors may offer to steer the process for you, it typically comes at a price: taking a portion of your Meaningful Use dollars.

CareCloud's experience has found that the available public resources from CMS and others are thorough and sufficient for most practices. We provide the technology, which is what we do best... and you get to keep 100% of your incentive payments.