

## Community Partners Application Information

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### *Instructions for Communities Seeking To Participate In The Medicare Electronic Health Records (EHR) Demonstration*

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is soliciting partners interested in working with CMS to implement the Electronic Health Records (EHR) Demonstration in their communities. Organizations seeking to partner with CMS to implement this demonstration in their regions must complete a “Medicare Waiver Demonstration Application”. Below are instructions for completing the application. Applications will be considered timely if we have received them no later than 5 pm Tuesday May 13, 2008.

#### **Background:**

The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services has directed the CMS to develop a new demonstration initiative using Medicare waiver authority to reward the delivery of high-quality care supported by the adoption and use of electronic health records (EHR). The goal of this demonstration is to foster the implementation and adoption of EHRs and health information technology (HIT) more broadly as effective vehicles to improve the quality of care provided and transform the way medicine is practiced and delivered. Adoption of HIT has the potential to provide significant savings to the Medicare program and improve the quality of care rendered to Medicare beneficiaries. This demonstration is designed to leverage the combined forces of private and public payers to drive physician practices to widespread adoption and use of EHRs.

All participating physician practices will be required to have implemented a Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT)-certified EHR by the end of the second year of the demonstration. (CCHIT is the recognized certification authority for EHRs and their networks.) Physician practices must, as part of the demonstration, be utilizing the EHR by that time to perform specific minimum core functionalities that can positively impact patient care processes, e.g., clinical documentation, ordering of lab tests, recording lab tests, and recording of prescriptions. However, the core incentive payment will be based on performance on the quality measures, with an additional incentive payment based on the degree of HIT functionality used to manage care.

The EHR demonstration will be operational for a 5-year period but will be implemented in two phases. During the first phase, the first 4 sites will be implemented. The second phase will follow one year later with 8 additional sites. Each phase will operate for the full five-year period. In each phase, the first operational year of the demonstration will provide payments to participating practices based on CCHIT-certified EHR functionalities used to manage the care of patients, with higher payment for more sophisticated HIT use (e.g., use of the EHR to facilitate care management activities, sharing of records among providers of care, etc.). Payments will be determined by a practice’s score on an Office Systems Survey (OSS), which will be administered annually

to track the level of EHR implementation at the practice level and the specific EHR functions employed by each participating practice to support the delivery of care. Higher scores on the OSS will result in increased incentive payments to participating practices.

After the second operational year of the demonstration, payments will be made to participating physician practices that are using CCHIT-certified EHRs and reporting clinical quality measures, again with additional payments based on EHR functionalities employed by the practice. Practices that have not yet implemented a CCHIT-certified EHR or do not meet minimum functional use requirements by the end of the second year will be terminated from the demonstration. During years 3 to 5 of the demonstration, payments to participating practices will be based on actual performance on the clinical quality measures, rather than just reporting, with an added payment each year based on the degree to which the practice has used the EHR to change and improve the way it operates.

### **Community Selection**

CMS is planning to implement this demonstration in up to 12 different sites. A site may be a state or other defined geographic region. We will be recruiting a total of approximately 2,400 small to medium sized, primary care physician practices for this demonstration. Half of the practices will be randomly selected to participate in the demonstration and the other half will be assigned to a control group. Therefore, approximately 200 practices will need to be recruited in each location where the demonstration is implemented. The demonstration will be implemented in phases, with 4 sites being implemented in the first phase and the remaining 8 sites being implemented one year later. CMS will determine which sites participate in which phase of the demonstration.

Although CMS staff will take the lead in implementation and retain full control over the design of the demonstration, which will be consistent across sites, CMS is seeking partners for each of the communities where the demonstration will be implemented. These “community partners” will assist with education, outreach activities, and recruitment of physician practices. Community partners will also collaborate with CMS on an ongoing basis in an effort to assist us in achieving our goal of leveraging the combined forces of private and public payers to drive physician practices to widespread adoption and use of EHRs. As such, we are seeking organizational entities that have the necessary infrastructure and a strong commitment to advancing the adoption of EHRs and are capable of supporting CMS in these activities. No funds will be available from CMS to assist organizations in their role as partners with CMS in this demonstration.

Communities will be selected based on how well they meet the criteria listed below. Organizations applying to partner with CMS in each community must complete the “Medicare Waiver Demonstration Application” and use that form to document how well it meets each of these criteria.

### **I. Minimum Criteria**

*All community applicants must document in the Medicare Waiver Demonstration Application how they meet these criteria.*

- 1) Does not conflict/compete with other active CMS Demonstrations.
  - *Because of the impact on existing demonstrations, certain areas are excluded from consideration for this demonstration. Table 1 includes a list of these states and counties. Applications from organizations proposing to work in these areas will not be considered. CMS reserves the right to modify this list, as needed, to meet demonstration or programmatic requirements.*
- 2) Defined geographic area with sufficient number of practices to support demonstration (treatment and control).
  - *Our goal is to recruit approximately 200 small to medium-sized primary care practices (100 to be randomized to the demonstration treatment group and the remaining 100 to be part of a control group) per community selected. Small to medium-sized is defined as less than 20 physicians in the practice, but priority for participation in the demonstration will be given to the smaller practices and practices that have not yet adopted an EHR.*
- 3) Defined community stakeholder collaboration, such as a AHRQ recognized Community Leader or Chartered Value Exchange, Better Quality Information to Improve Care for Medicare Beneficiaries (BQI) project site, or other similar entity committed to expanding the use of HIT. The organization must have an infrastructure (e.g., staff, partners, etc.), already in place to help support this project. The collaboration must have clear ties to the medical community, and specifically primary care physicians groups (e.g., via medical societies; professional associations, etc.) to facilitate recruitment across the defined geographic area.
- 4) Private sector support from employers and health insurers within the specified geographic area for the EHR demo, with likely probability that insurers will implement similar programs among regionally-based employers.

## **II. Desirable Criteria**

*Community applicants meeting these criteria may be given preference over other sites in the selection process.*

- 1) Private sector support from employers and health insurers within the specified geographic area, as evidenced by a willingness to use CMS measures and/or tools for physician recognition/incentive programs.
- 2) Preference for Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN) sites.

- 3) Preference for geographic regions to include under-served populations.
- 4) Preference for a mix of geographic regions that serve rural and urban populations.

## **Demonstration Application**

### **A. Eligible Organizations**

A variety of different types of organizations may be considered for selection as community partners for this demonstration. Regardless of organizational structure, entities seeking to partner with CMS for the EHR demonstration must have the capability to support CMS with this project as described above. The organization must represent a defined community stakeholder collaboration, such as an AHRQ recognized Community Leader or Chartered Value Exchange, Better Quality Information to Improve Care for Medicare Beneficiaries (BQI) project site, or other similar entity committed to expanding the use of HIT. The collaboration must also have clear ties to the medical community, and specifically primary care physicians groups (*e.g.*, via medical societies; professional associations, etc.) to facilitate recruitment across the defined geographic area and insure that sufficient practices are recruited to meet demonstration requirements.

### **B. Instructions**

Instructions for completing the application are provided on page 4 of the “Medicare Waiver Demonstration Application” under the “Application Contents Outline” and “Application Requirements” sections. Specifically, under the “Demonstration Design” section, applications should describe how the applicant can help CMS meet the goals outlined above and, in particular, recruit sufficient, eligible primary care physician practices from their community or specified geographic region. CMS plans to begin recruiting individual physician practices in September 2008. Therefore, applicants should expect to have no more than 3 months to work with CMS in planning a recruitment strategy followed by 3 months to work with CMS to recruit individual physician practices. Although CMS is seeking partners to help in the outreach and recruitment effort, CMS and/or its independent contractors will be responsible for all operational activities related to receiving and processing applications from physician practices seeking to participate in the demonstration. In addition, CMS will be responsible for all decisions regarding eligibility of individual physician practices to participate in the demonstration as well as assignment to the treatment or control group.

Under the “Organizational Structure and Capabilities” section, applicants should make sure to describe in detail the resources they are able to bring to this effort. Experience with similar outreach and recruitment activities should be highlighted as well.

Applicants should note that CMS is not providing any additional funds to community partners as part of this project. Therefore, the section of the application on payment methodology and budget neutrality need not be completed.

### **C. Requirements for Submission**

Applicants must submit their applications in the standard format outlined in CMS' Medicare Waiver Demonstration Application in order to be considered for review. Applications not received in this format will not be considered for review. Applications should refer to "EHR Demonstration" and be mailed or delivered to the following address:

Michael K. Nelson  
Office of Policy  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
200 Independence Ave., SW, Room 337D  
Washington, DC 20201

For further information on application submission requirements, please submit an email to<sup>1</sup>:

[EHR\\_Demo\\_CommunitySelections@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:EHR_Demo_CommunitySelections@cms.hhs.gov)

For questions about the demonstration design, contact Jody Blatt at (410) 786-6921 or Debbie Van Hoven at (410) 786-6625 or [EHR\\_Demo@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:EHR_Demo@cms.hhs.gov).

Applications must be received by 5 pm Tuesday May 13, 2008. Only applications that are considered timely will be reviewed and considered. Applications must be typed for clarity and *must not exceed 25 double spaced pages*, exclusive of the cover letter, executive summary, resumes, forms, and any supporting documentation. *An unbound original and four paper copies must be submitted*. Applicants may, but are not required to, submit a total of ten copies to assure that each reviewer receives an application in the manner intended by the application (for example, collated, tabulated, color copies). In addition, applicants may, but are not required to, submit an electronic copy to:

[EHR\\_Demo\\_CommunitySelections@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:EHR_Demo_CommunitySelections@cms.hhs.gov)

Hard copies and electronic copies must be identical. Applicants must designate one copy as the official proposal.

Each applicant must also provide a letter signed by the chief executive officer or other authorized executive staff administrator or other senior official committing the sponsoring partner organization to participate in this demonstration. At a minimum, applicants should ensure that their applications and supplemental materials include the information requested in the application package and/or this announcement.

### **D. Evaluation Criteria**

A technical review panel will assess and score applicant responsiveness and ability to

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that there is an "underscore ( \_ )" between words in the email address.

meet the mandatory and preferred criteria listed above. Organizations should provide all of the critical information to assess their proposals as part of the core, 25-page application. Responses should provide clear and convincing evidence that the proposed community and sponsoring partner organization are able to meet all of the criteria.

**E. Final Selection**

The CMS Administrator will make the final selection of participants from among the most highly qualified proposals. CMS plans to select 12 demonstration sites although, as stated, implementation will be phased in. Four sites will be implemented in the first phase followed by the remaining eight in a second phase one year later. CMS reserves the right to determine which sites are implemented in each phase and/or adjust this schedule, as needed, based on operational or other considerations.

**TABLE 1: Areas Excluded from the EHR Demonstration**

<b>State</b>	<b>Counties</b>
Arizona	All counties
Arkansas	All counties
California	All counties
Colorado	All counties
Connecticut	All counties
Florida	Alachua
Florida	Broward
Florida	Marion
Florida	Miami-Dade
Florida	Palm Beach
Florida	Seminole
Florida	Volusia
Idaho	All counties
Indiana	Boone
Indiana	Brown
Indiana	Clark
Indiana	Floyd
Indiana	Hamilton
Indiana	Hancock
Indiana	Harrison
Indiana	Hendricks
Indiana	Johnson
Indiana	Madison
Indiana	Marion
Indiana	Morgan
Indiana	Putnam
Indiana	Shelby
Indiana	Washington
Kentucky	Bullitt
Kentucky	Henry
Kentucky	Jefferson
Kentucky	Meade
Kentucky	Nelson
Kentucky	Oldham
Kentucky	Shelby
Kentucky	Spencer
Kentucky	Thimble
Massachusetts	All counties
Michigan	Genessee
Michigan	Ingham
Michigan	Jackson
Michigan	Lenawee

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<b>State</b>	<b>Counties</b>
Michigan	Livingston
Michigan	Macomb
Michigan	Monroe
Michigan	Oakland
Michigan	Washtenaw
Michigan	Wayne
Minnesota	Anoka
Minnesota	Carver
Minnesota	Dakota
Minnesota	Hennepin
Minnesota	Houston
Minnesota	Ramsey
Minnesota	Scott
Minnesota	Wright
Missouri	Barry
Missouri	Cedar
Missouri	Christian
Missouri	Dade
Missouri	Dallas
Missouri	Douglas
Missouri	Greene
Missouri	Howell
Missouri	Laclede
Missouri	Lawerence
Missouri	Phelps
Missouri	Polk
Missouri	Pulaski
Missouri	Stone
Missouri	Taney
Missouri	Texas
Missouri	Webster
Missouri	Wright
Montana	All counties
Nebraska	All counties
New Hampshire	Belknap
New Hampshire	Cheshire
New Hampshire	Coos
New Hampshire	Grafton
New Hampshire	Hillsborough
New Hampshire	Merrimack
New Hampshire	Rockingham
New Hampshire	Sullivan
New York	All counties

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<b>State</b>	<b>Counties</b>
North Carolina	All counties
Ohio	Delaware
Ohio	Fairfield
Ohio	Franklin
Ohio	Licking
Ohio	Madison
Ohio	Morrow
Ohio	Pickaway
Ohio	Union
Oregon	All counties
Pennsylvania	Centre
Pennsylvania	Clearfield
Pennsylvania	Clinton
Pennsylvania	Columbia
Pennsylvania	Juniata
Pennsylvania	Lackawanna
Pennsylvania	Luzerne
Pennsylvania	Lycoming
Pennsylvania	Mifflin
Pennsylvania	Monroe
Pennsylvania	Montour
Pennsylvania	Northumberland
Pennsylvania	Schuylkill
Pennsylvania	Snyder
Pennsylvania	Susquehanna
Pennsylvania	Union
Pennsylvania	Wyoming
South Carolina	Anderson
South Carolina	Berkeley
South Carolina	Charleston
South Carolina	Cherokee
South Carolina	Dorchester
South Carolina	Greenville
South Carolina	Laurens
South Carolina	Oconee
South Carolina	Pickens
South Carolina	Spartanburg
South Carolina	Union
Utah	All counties
Vermont	Caledonia
Vermont	Orange
Vermont	Orleans
Vermont	Washington

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<b>State</b>	<b>Counties</b>
Vermont	Windsor
Vermont	Windham
Washington	All counties
Wisconsin	Ashland
Wisconsin	Barron
Wisconsin	Chippewa
Wisconsin	Clark
Wisconsin	Eau Claire
Wisconsin	Lincoln
Wisconsin	Marathon
Wisconsin	Oneida
Wisconsin	Portage
Wisconsin	Price
Wisconsin	Rusk
Wisconsin	Sawyer
Wisconsin	Shawano
Wisconsin	Taylor
Wisconsin	Vilas
Wisconsin	Washburn
Wisconsin	Wood
Wyoming	Big Horn
Wyoming	Park