

best

practices

Meaningful Use: Now's the Time to Act

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), healthcare providers who demonstrate “meaningful use” of certified electronic health records can qualify for incentive payments through Medicaid and Medicare.

While the meaningful use standards are still being shaped, one thing is clear: Centricity® Practice Solution version 9.5 will be certified for meaningful use, and it will be available later in 2010.

Three Stages

Demonstrating meaningful use involves three stages, which will be implemented over the next five years, beginning in 2011. Over the next two years, meaningful use focuses on Stage 1 — capturing and sharing data — which involves 25 general criteria (plus some specialty-specific criteria). These include such requirements as being able to demonstrate that the practice has recorded the smoking status of patients over age 13 in 80% of cases, or has transmitted prescriptions electronically in 75% of cases. At the end of the 90-day demonstration period, physicians must “attest” that they have met the requirements.

“With Centricity, your practice has the right partner and the right solution to meet meaningful use requirements and be eligible for ARRA incentives,” said GE Healthcare Senior Marketing Manager Don Sepulveda. “Centricity customers should be able to demonstrate Stage 1 meaningful use as early as next year.”

Reimbursements Begin in 2011

Reimbursements vary by Medicare and Medicaid, but for Medicare, eligible professionals who demonstrate meaningful use in 2011 or 2012 can

receive up to \$18,000 per provider in incentive payments during those years.

Continuing to show meaningful use in 2013 through 2015, eligible professionals can receive up to \$16,000 more, for a total of \$44,000 over five years. But, the later you start, the less incentive money you'll earn: the largest payments come in the early years. Note that providers who haven't demonstrated meaningful use by 2015 will be penalized.

Here's How?

At HealthSystems, we know that many practices are wary of the perceived “hassle factor” of meeting meaningful use requirements, but we strongly encourage participation for several reasons:

Centricity makes it easy. With Centricity, all of the data you need is automatically captured for you, so demonstrating meaningful use will be easy. If you are signed up for MQIC (see sidebar), reporting will be seamless.

Criteria not difficult. While meeting the requirements may look daunting at first, the criteria are really not difficult. Again, Centricity allows you to meet these with relative ease.

Offset your investment. \$44,000 per provider can go a long way to offsetting your hardware, software and training investment. The earlier you start, the more you can earn.

We are happy to discuss meaningful use requirements with you at any time. For more information, please visit our website to view GE webinars about meaningful use, register for our six-part “Road to Meaningful Use” webinar series, or contact Maurice Rosenbaum at mrosenbaum@healthsystems.net or 404-207-1298.

MQIC & Meaningful Use

GE's Medical Quality Improvement Consortium (MQIC) is a HIPAA-compliant, identity-stripped data warehouse open to all Centricity EMR users. By participating in MQIC, physicians have an unprecedented capability to assess their performance against national benchmarks, and it will meet the ARRA meaningful use reporting requirements.

MQIC is also certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for the Physician Quality Reporting Program (PQRI), which allows practices to qualify for a 2% incentive bonus on their total Medicare Part B allowable charges. MQIC can also be used to qualify for the 2010 CMS ePrescribing incentive program.

For more information about participating in MQIC, please contact us at info@healthsystems.net.



Authorized Partner
GE Healthcare
Centricity Practice Solution

HealthSystems

Cardiology Group Puts EMR at the Heart of Practice

It's been a busy few years for Heart South Cardiovascular Group, a thriving cardiology practice in Alabaster, Alabama. The group has grown considerably since its



inception in 2003, and in the last two years added both Centricity PM and EMR. The EMR implementation, completed last winter, was spearheaded by the group's two newest physicians, Dr. Cliff Vance and Dr. Munish Goyal.

"We have a significant Medicare population, and we knew we would add EMR eventually," said Heart South Administrator Rita Johnson. "But the real impetus came when Drs. Vance and Goyal, who had used EMR in their fellowships, pushed us to start the process and agreed to be our project leaders. It was their vision."

And a big vision it was. The practice has multiple locations and is technology intense. The doctors wanted to integrate the EMR with as much technology as they could. "Our project committee felt it was important to make the most of the system," said Johnson. "We wanted to be able to improve our workflow to the greatest extent possible."

What a Difference

The EMR implementation began in December 2008. To allow time to get used to the new system, the group reduced its schedule by 50% the first week, 25% the second week, and went back to a normal schedule by the third week. By March 31, 2009, everyone in the practice was using the EMR. "We knew we had to make the switch fast," Johnson said. "Working out of two systems just was not going to work."

The group's trainer, HealthSystems' Randy Cook, worked closely with the staff to bring them up to speed. In addition to all the standard EMR functions, the group is using ePrescribing, and has integrated EKG, vital signs, nuclear medicine, echocardiogram and CTA reports and images, and lab and hospital reports. They also added Dragon NaturallySpeaking voice recognition software so that they could avoid transcription time and costs.

In the past, the staff dragged suitcases of paper files with them from location to location. Once the EMR was up, they embarked on a very aggressive document scanning "pre-load" so that all of the current patients' charts were in the EMR in time for their next appointments. "It's especially nice for our clinicians to be able to show patients their own images," said Johnson. "I think the patients are impressed that their doctors are so progressive."

Words to the Wise

Johnson suggests that practices considering EMR do some homework before starting the process. "We visited a similar, very busy practice in Tampa that was using Centricity EMR just to see how it worked in the office setting," she said. "We also talked with them, and

with HealthSystems, about what we could expect in terms of process, training and going live with the system."

Now that the EMR has been up and running for a while, Johnson can't imagine what they did without it.

"The efficiencies are amazing," she said. "No more paper charts. ePrescribing is great. Lab and test results feed directly into the system. Nothing gets lost or misplaced. Our doctors love it and our patients love it."

At A Glance

Physicians 6
Nurse Practitioners 5
Support Staff 44

2 offices, 4 outreach locations,
2 nuclear medicine cameras,
3 echocardiogram units,
1 multislice CT scanner

Save the Date for CHUG in Orlando

It's time for a road trip! Pack the family and join us in Orlando for the fall Centricity Healthcare User Group (CHUG) conference, scheduled for October 15 and 16 in Orlando. Specifically geared to physicians and clinicians, this conference will be a great opportunity to learn from GE representatives and collaborate with other active users.

Orlando is the closest the CHUG conference has ever come to our area, so we highly recommend the trip.

For more information or to register, visit www.centricityusers.com or email info@healthsystems.net

How to contact us...

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Online support is available at www.healthsystems.net/support

Ask the Experts

The HealthSystems support staff knows many tricks and tips to help you use your Centricity office system more efficiently. Here are answers to questions frequently asked of support team members Mirian Smith and Karen Lands.



Mirian Smith

Prior to joining HealthSystems, **Mirian Smith** was the office manager at a pediatrics practice in Alabama. There, she gained experience in a wide range of practice operations, from scheduling and billing to referrals, prior authorizations and HR issues. She also handled the practice's EMR implementation. Now a Clinical Consultant at HealthSystems, Mirian has recently completed certification and training in CCC and advanced CCC customizations and VFE form development.



Karen Lands

Karen Lands joined HealthSystems in December 2009, after five years working as a trainer, support and product specialist, and sales support manager for a GE Centricity VAR in the Midwest. Karen has nearly 20 years of experience in healthcare. She has worked in various physician practices, handling collections, coding and billing. She has also served as a physician communications liaison for Medicare.

New Handouts

By Mirian Smith

Q: How do I transition to the new Centricity EMR ExitCare patient handouts?

A: All EMR clients will be required to upgrade to ExitCare handouts even if the practice does not currently use handouts. The transition process is explained in a complimentary HealthSystems webinar, which can be accessed on our website. The webinar goes into depth about ExitCare handouts and the transition process.

As the webinar explains, we must schedule a time to implement these changes, even if you do not use handouts today and do not want to update your custom handout list. The old ones need to be removed and replaced with ExitCare so they will be available when you want it. If you do use handouts or would like to update your custom list, we will transition your practice in two phases. Phase One includes running a handout report in your live system, installing or updating a demo database, and installing ExitCare and your custom handout list. Then you can update the custom handout list based on the cross-reference file and the handout report.

Phase Two will then be scheduled to update your live system with the ExitCare handouts and your new custom handout list that includes ExitCare handouts.

Note that we must schedule a time to implement the changes together. Please notify us to schedule a time to install ExitCare handouts.

PQRI Bonuses

By Karen Lands

Q: How can I get my PQRI Medicare 2% bonus and my ePrescribing 1.5% bonus for 2010 without submitting G-Codes for my claims?

A: For practices that have been manually entering G-Codes related to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) PQRI and ePrescribing bonuses for 2010, there's a better option. GE offers a solution to automate this process called Medical Quality Improvement Consortium (MQIC). MQIC is a HIPAA-compliant program for collecting and de-identifying patient data to provide practices with quality reporting.

First, consider the requirements for PQRI: Practices that have currently reported 100% to CMS in 2010 can sign up for MQIC to convert and automate this process. Using observation terms in the Centricity EMR forms related to PQRI-measured disease states, MQIC can automate the collection and submission of data needed for the required reporting.

MQIC automates the submission to CMS by using the TIN and NPI for each reporting provider, and also provides a web portal to view practice data and the associated quality reports.

Also in 2010, CMS is offering an ePrescribing bonus. If you are currently using ePrescribing or are planning to implement ePrescribing, MQIC can automate the reporting for this as well.

For 2011, MQIC is preparing for meaningful use and the associated reporting required as part of the ARRA HITECH Act. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact us.

Mark Your Calendar

Please make note of these upcoming events.

July

28-30 Alabama MGMA, Sandestin, Florida

August

- 10** West Central Georgia MGMA, Columbus (Medical Center Conference Center)
- 19** Montgomery MGMA, Montgomery (Arrowhead Country Club)

September

- 9** Atlanta MGMA Accounts Receivable Summit (The Retreat)
- 15** North Fulton MGMA, Alpharetta, Georgia (Northside Hospital, Alpharetta Campus)
- 23** Central Savannah River MGMA, Augusta (Doubletree Hotel)
- 24** Dothan/Wiregrass MGMA Annual Seminar (Southeast Alabama Medical Center)

October

15-16 Centricity Healthcare User Group (CHUG) Conference, Orlando (For details, visit www.centricityusers.com.)

We are continuously adding new classes and events to our training schedule. For up-to-date information and registration details, visit www.healthsystems.net/events.

NEWS & NOTES

Save the Date

While we're still very early in the planning stages, HealthSystems is already looking forward to the 2011 Southeast User Conference. It will likely be held in the early spring, and will be hosted by HealthSystems and our VAR partner, Strategic Business Systems. Programming suggestions and ideas are welcome! Contact Karen Byrne at kbyrne@healthsystems.net or 404-207-1295.

GE Announces Centricity Advance

GE Healthcare recently acquired a California-based developer of a PM and EMR solution for independent clinical practices. The solution, now known as Centricity Advance, is a hosted "Software as a Service (SaaS)" solution, so small practices — one to three physicians — won't need to invest in as much infrastructure. HealthSystems will be offering the Centricity Advance Solution in the very near future. For more information, see www.gehealthcare.com/centricityadvance.

Meaningful Use Webinars Scheduled

Attention all EMR users! HealthSystems is offering a series of six "Road to Meaningful Use" webinars beginning in July. These free, hour-long webinars will be held once a month and will tell you everything you need to know about meaningful use and how to maximize your ARRA HITECH Act incentives. For more information, visit our website or contact Karen Byrne at kbyrne@healthsystems.net or 404-207-1295.

Employee Spotlight: Jan Jennings

Jan Jennings' favorite color? Purple. That's the signature hue of the Alzheimer's Association; and Jan serves on the Northwest Metro Memory Walk steering committee of the Alzheimer's Association in Georgia. Every October, she also participates in the association's Memory Walk, in honor of her mother and others who have succumbed to Alzheimer's Disease. Jan would love for you join her or sponsor her on her walk this fall at Six Flags. For more information, visit www.georgiamemorywalk.org or contact Jan at jjennings@healthsystems.net or 404-207-1289.

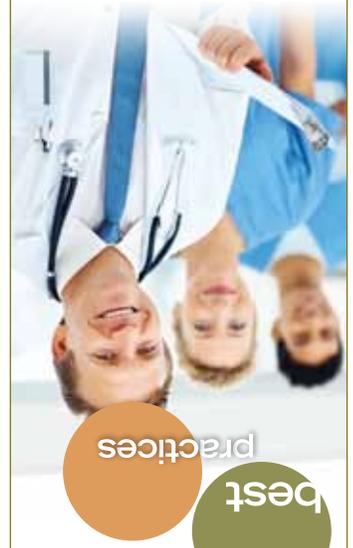


Authorized Partner
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