

MES Oversight Design Principles

Design principles help everyone involved in building and supporting Medicaid Enterprise Systems (MES) oversight stay focused and aligned on a shared vision of what it means to **truly orient the funding and oversight of MES investments toward directly improving Medicaid & CHIP program outcomes**. The principles should be specific enough to drive clear decisions, and broad enough to apply to all parts of MES oversight.

How we're intending for these principles to be used

As CMS seeks to redesign aspects of how we oversee MES investments, these are the characteristics we expect our entire oversight practice to embody. We'll evaluate efforts to redesign oversight for alignment with these principles, and will continue to check over time how our overall oversight practice aligns with them as well.

Who should be interacting with these principles regularly

We expect MES leadership to be the primary users of these principles, using them to assess the alignment of current oversight redesign efforts, as well as using them to guide all future iterations of MES oversight. We also hope that State Officers will use them to call out areas of their oversight duties that don't feel aligned with these principles, to create opportunities to continuously adjust our processes and practices.

What we mean by "MES oversight"

When we say "MES oversight," we mean any actions or activities stemming from DSG's responsibility to fund and support the successful execution of state and territorial development and management of Medicaid Enterprise Systems (MES).

Our design principles

Keep people at the heart of everything we do.

Processes and systems don't power the Medicaid & CHIP programs, *people* do. As such, we prioritize fostering collaborative relationships across CMS, the MES team, states, and territories, because our combined efforts have a huge impact on the public's experience of our programs.

Tie every decision back to program outcomes and end-user needs.

Every technology investment we make should directly improve how MES systems work for the people who use them, whether those users are members of the public, healthcare providers, or government employees. We reinforce this expectation in all of our interactions and communications.

Minimize burden at every opportunity.

Oversight should feel like a natural and supportive part of service delivery efforts, as opposed to an added chore that exists completely outside the task of service delivery. We look for ways to minimize interference and unnecessary burden for all involved and avoid imposing one-size-fits-all solutions.

Make consistent, transparent, and evidence-based decisions.

We use both current and historical evidence to inform our investment decisions. We foster transparency by regularly communicating throughout the entire lifecycle of each MES investment. We proactively communicate our expectations and decision criteria in a way that is understandable and actionable.

Be discerning stewards of public funds.

We are stewards of a finite amount of taxpayer dollars. It's our responsibility to only fund MES projects that are well positioned to measurably improve program and end user outcomes. When that is not the case, it's our responsibility to say "no" and support our collaborators to adjust their approach accordingly.