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INTERMEDIATE

EHR INCENTIVE PROGRAMS: WHAT'S NEW FOR STAGE 1 IN 2014



Beginning in 2014, there are several changes to the Stage 1 Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Programs meaningful use objectives, measures, and exclusions for eligible professionals, eligible hospitals, and critical access hospitals (CAHs).

These changes took effect on October 1, 2013, for eligible hospitals and CAHs and on January 1, 2014, for eligible professionals. Although some of the changes to meaningful use objectives, measures, and exclusions are optional, others are required. Below is an overview of the Stage 1 changes that apply in 2013.

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REQUIRED for All Providers in 2014

Patient Electronic Access

- **Change:** Addition of new core objective to provide patients with ability to view online, download, and transmit health information for all providers
- **Timing/Compliance:** Added for 2014 and beyond
- **Affected Providers:** Eligible professionals, eligible hospitals, and CAHs
- **What It Means:** To better align Stage 1 objectives with the new 2014 capabilities of Certified EHR Technology, several Stage 1 objectives for providing electronic copies of and electronic access to health information have been replaced with objectives to provide patients the ability to view, download, or transmit their health information or hospital admission information online

New EP Objective:

Provide patients the ability to view online, download and transmit their health information within 4 business days of the information being available to the eligible professional.

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New Hospital Objective:

Provide patients the ability to view online, download and transmit information about a hospital admission.

REQUIRED for All Providers in 2014

Record and Chart Changes in Vital Signs*

- **Change:** Increase in age limit for recording blood pressure in patients to age 3; removal of age limit requirement for height and weight
- **Timing/Compliance:** Required in 2014 and beyond
- **Affected Providers:** Eligible professionals, eligible hospitals, and CAHs
- **What It Means:** In 2014, all providers must report using the new age limits below

New Measure:

More than 50 percent of all unique patients seen by the eligible professional or admitted to the eligible hospital's or CAH's inpatient or emergency department (POS 21 or 23) during the EHR reporting period have blood pressure (for patients age 3 and over only) and height and weight (for all ages) recorded as structured data.

*Exclusion for eligible professionals for Record and Chart Changes in Vital Signs also changed. See page 3.

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REQUIRED for Eligible Professionals in 2014

Record and Chart Changes in Vital Signs

- **Change:** Exclusion for eligible professionals: if they see no patients 3 years or older; if all three vital signs are not relevant to their scope of practice; if height and weight are not relevant to their scope of practice; or if blood pressure is not relevant to their scope of practice
- **Timing/Compliance:** Replaces prior exclusion criteria starting in 2014
- **Affected Providers:** Eligible professionals
- **What It Means:** Previously, eligible professionals could only exclude this objective if all three vital signs were not relevant to their scope of practice or if they saw no patients 3 years or older. Beginning in 2014, eligible professionals can be excluded from recording blood pressure if blood pressure is not relevant to their scope of practice, or from recording height and weight if both height and weight are not relevant to their scope of practice

Exclusion: Eligible professionals who:

- 1 See no patients 3 years or older are excluded from recording blood pressure;
- 2 Believe that all three vital signs of height, weight, and blood pressure have no relevance to their scope of practice are excluded from recording them;
- 3 Believe that height and weight are relevant to their scope of practice, but blood pressure is not, are excluded from recording blood pressure; or
- 4 Believe that blood pressure is relevant to their scope of practice, but height and weight are not, are excluded from recording height and weight.

REMOVED for All Providers in 2014

Electronic Copy of Health Information

- **Change:** Removal of electronic copy of health information core objective for Stage 1 for all providers
- **Timing/Compliance:** Removed in 2014 and beyond
- **Affected Providers:** Eligible professionals, eligible hospitals, and CAHs
- **What It Means:** Providers will no longer have to meet or attest to this objective for the EHR Incentive Programs, but will now meet the patient electronic access objective.

Objective Removed:

Beginning in 2014, the objective for providing electronic copies of health information will no longer be required for Stage 1 for eligible professionals, eligible hospitals, and CAHs. CMS is replacing this objective and electronic access to health information with objectives to provide patients the ability to view, download, or transmit their health information or hospital admission information online.

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REMOVED for All Providers in 2014

Clinical Quality Measures

- **Change:** Removal of clinical quality measure (CQM) as a separate core objective for Stage 1 for all providers
- **Timing/Compliance:** Removed in 2014 and beyond
- **Affected Providers:** Eligible professionals, eligible hospitals, and CAHs
- **What It Means:** Providers will no longer have to meet or attest to this objective for the EHR Incentive Programs, but are still required to report CQMS to achieve meaningful use.

Objective Removed:

Beginning in 2014, the separate objective to report clinical quality measures (CQMs) will no longer be required for Stage 1 for eligible professionals, eligible hospitals, and CAHs. Reporting CQMs will still be required in order to achieve meaningful use.

REMOVED for Eligible Professionals in 2014

Electronic Access to Health Information

- **Change:** Removal of electronic access to health information menu objective for Stage 1 for eligible professionals
- **Timing/Compliance:** Removed in 2014 and beyond
- **Affected Providers:** Eligible professionals
- **What It Means:** Eligible professionals will no longer have to meet or attest to this objective for the EHR Incentive Programs, but will now meet the new patient electronic access objective.

Objective Removed:

Beginning in 2014, the menu objective for timely electronic access to health information will no longer be required for Stage 1 for eligible professionals. CMS is replacing this objective and electronic copy of health information with objective to provide patients the ability to view, download, or transmit their health information online.

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REMOVED for Eligible Hospitals and CAHs in 2014

Electronic Copy of Discharge Instructions

- **Change:** Removal of electronic copy of discharge instructions core objective for Stage 1 for eligible hospitals and CAHs
- **Timing/Compliance:** Removed in 2014 and beyond
- **Affected Providers:** Eligible hospitals, CAHs
- **What It Means:** Eligible hospitals and CAHs will no longer have to meet or attest to this objective for the EHR Incentive Programs, but will now meet the new patient electronic access objective.

Objective Removed:

Beginning in 2014, the core objective for electronic copy of discharge instructions will no longer be required for Stage 1 for eligible hospitals and CAHs. CMS is replacing this objective and electronic copy of health information with objective to provide patients the ability to view, download, or transmit their hospital admission information online.

For more details about each of these changes review the Stage 1 Changes Tipsheet:

<http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/EHRIncentivePrograms/Downloads/Stage1ChangesTipsheet.pdf>