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Provider Attestation for Medicare Meaningful Use Payment Incentives Begins April 18, 2011

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced that eligible providers will soon be able to complete the requisite attestation for Medicare meaningful use incentive payments using its web-based Medicare EHR Incentive Program Registration and Attestation System. To receive incentive payments under CMS's Medicare EHR Incentive Program, eligible professionals and eligible hospitals must register and attest that they have demonstrated meaningful use of certified EHR technology. Although CMS's Attestation System opened in January, it currently only allows eligible professionals and eligible hospitals to register for Medicare EHR incentive payments. Starting April 18, 2011, eligible providers will be able to complete the application process for incentive payments by making the required attestation online. A preview of the web-based Attestation System is now available on CMS's website and can be viewed [here](#).

To complete the attestation process, eligible professionals, eligible hospitals, and critical access hospitals must report certain data demonstrating that they have met meaningful use objectives and must attest that they successfully meet the meaningful use requirements. CMS's preview of the Attestation System provides a step-by-step overview of the attestation process and includes screenshot images of the actual site providers will use. Providers using the web-based Attestation System will be prompted to report certain data and complete a series of questions for each required meaningful use objective or measure. While the preview is intended to give examples of how the Attestation System will look, CMS has advised that the final system may include further changes. CMS plans to release additional information in the near future to assist providers in completing the attestation process, including a more detailed user guide and a series of educational webinars. CMS expects to begin making Medicare EHR incentive payments as soon as May 2011.

The web-based EHR Incentive Program Registration and Attestation System only applies to Medicare and does not automatically qualify providers for incentive payments under the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program. The attestation procedure for the Medicaid EHR Incentive

Program is expected to follow a similar process but will be determined by each state Medicaid agency. For example, Michigan providers must first register with CMS's EHR Incentive Program Registration and Attestation System before they can apply for Medicaid EHR incentive payments through the Michigan Department of Community Health's online CHAMPS system, which opened in January 2011.

Providers who intend to seek meaningful use incentive payments should review CMS's preview of the Attestation System to ensure that they will be ready to electronically complete the attestation for Medicare EHR incentive payments. Eligible hospitals and eligible professionals should also monitor CMS's website for additional guidance on the attestation process. For more information on Medicare or Medicaid meaningful use incentive payments or the web-based Attestation System, please contact any member of the Honigman Health Care Department.