DHHS Announces Program to Advance Electronic Health Records

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of Medicaid Business and Policy (OMBP), announces it has launched its Medicaid Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Program. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) funds this nationwide program; states administer the funds by providing incentive payments to eligible healthcare providers and hospitals as they adopt and meaningfully use certified EHR technology. The ultimate goal is to broaden the use of EHRs in meaningful ways to help improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of patient health care.

“We’re very excited to offer these incentive payments to New Hampshire’s healthcare providers,” said DHHS Commissioner Nicholas Toumpas. “EHR technology will streamline healthcare systems and improve the quality of care while lowering costs. Investments like this will provide the infrastructure needed to support healthcare reforms in New Hampshire and throughout the country that will promote affordable, quality care.”

“With these incentive grants, New Hampshire will be able to use EHR technology to support patients, and providers in making more informed healthcare decisions,” stated NH Medicaid Director Katie Dunn. “The widespread adoption of electronic health records will allow secure, real-time patient care coordination; more accurate medical records; elimination of duplicate screenings and tests; and increased patient engagement in their own care.”

The Medicaid EHR Incentive was established through provisions of the federal Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. New Hampshire expects to distribute approximately $52 million to eligible healthcare professionals and acute care hospitals through 2021, when the program ends.

Lilac City Pediatrics in Rochester was the first practice to receive Medicaid EHR incentive payments in New Hampshire. “In these difficult economic times, it would be impossible for a small practice like ours to make the large investment needed to convert to an EHR,” said Walter Hoerman, a pediatrician at the practice. “This program allows us to move forward with this important advancement to provide better coordinated healthcare to the children and families we serve.”

The New Hampshire Medicaid Office of Business and Policy is responsible for the implementation of the New Hampshire Medicaid EHR Incentive Program as well as auditing activities to verify provider eligibility criteria. They are partnering with the Regional Extension Center of New Hampshire to provide outreach, and support, to New Hampshire providers as they apply for Medicaid EHR incentive payments. For more information on the New Hampshire Medicaid EHR Incentive Program, visit www.dhhs.nh.gov/ombp/ehr.

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