

CORNERSTONE IN FOCUS: Learn More About the Electronic Health Records Demo

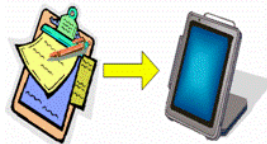
A new demonstration initiative announced by HHS last month will reward the delivery of high-quality care that is supported by the adoption of Electronic Health Records (EHRs). The goal of the project, developed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), is to foster the implementation and adoption of EHRs more broadly to aid in improving the quality of health care and transform the way medicine is practiced and delivered.

The EHR demonstration will be conducted for a five-year period. By the end of the second year, all participating physician practices must have in place EHRs certified by the Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT), the recognized authority for EHRs and their networks. Participating physician practices must use EHRs to perform specific minimum core functionalities that can positively impact patient care processes, such as clinical documentation, ordering of lab tests, recording lab tests, and ordering prescriptions.

Payments to participating practices in the first year of the project will be based on use of certified EHR products to manage the care of patients. Higher payments will be offered for use of more sophisticated technology, such as facilitating care management activities or sharing of records among providers of care. Payments will be determined by a practice's score on the Office Systems Survey (OSS), which will be administered annually to track the level of EHR implementation by the practice and the specific EHR functions employed to support the delivery of care. Higher scores on the OSS will result in increased incentive payments to participating practices.

During the second year, payments will be made to participating physician practices using certified EHRs and reporting clinical quality measures. Additional payments will be available for the most aggressive adopters of technology. Payments will continue during years three to five of the demonstration, and an added bonus will be available each year based on the degree to which the practice has used the EHR to change and improve the way it operates.

Stay tuned for more details about the EHR project as they become available. [Read more](#) about last month's project announcement.



Profile of a Community Leader: Puget Sound Health Alliance

Named the first Value-driven Health Care Community Leader, the Puget Sound Health Alliance is a regional partnership involving employers, physicians, hospitals, patients, health plans, and others working together to improve quality and efficiency while reducing the rate of health care costs in the greater Seattle region.



The Alliance is one of the first organizations to develop a public "Report Card" on regional health care. The first report, due out in January 2008, is based on data for care provided to more than 50 percent of the insured population in the region. The January report will show results for about 80 clinics that have six or more primary care providers (doctors and others). The Alliance plans to include results for all clinics in the region in the second report, due in mid-2008. Visit the [Puget Sound Health Alliance's Web site](#) to learn more.

To learn more about becoming a Community Leader, review the online [Certification Statement](#).

Leavitt Foresees a Health Care System Based on Competition and Value

At a recent speech to the American Enterprise Institute, HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt laid out his vision for a health care system based on national standards and local control. He noted that Chartered Value Exchanges, which HHS will begin naming in January, are key to the future of America's health care system and to providing Americans with the information they need to make better informed health care decisions. [Watch video](#) of the Secretary's speech online.

The Next Step for Community Leaders: Apply to Be a Chartered Value Exchange

The application period for Chartered Value Exchanges (CVE) will close on Wednesday, December 19, 2007. [Download the application or learn more](#) about CVE requirements online.

Isn't It Time? Declare Your Support.

[Sign up today](#) to be a part of the Value-Driven Health Care movement.



"Every American should have access to a full range of information about the quality and cost of their health care options."

Secretary Michael O. Leavitt