



December 2013

## CMS Releases Statement on Progress of EHR Incentive Programs

On December 6, 2013, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which administers the Medicare and Medicaid Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Programs (the EHR Incentive Programs), updated the public on the growth of the adoption and meaningful use of EHR technology and proposed a new timeline for the implementation of meaningful use for the EHR Incentive Programs. In addition, the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) proposed a new approach to update the ONC's EHR technology certification regulations. The CMS statement is available [here](#).

### Highlights of the statement:

- CMS stated that, as of October 2013, 85 percent of eligible hospitals and more than 60 percent of eligible professionals (as defined by the EHR Incentive Programs) had received an incentive payment under the EHR Incentive Programs.
- CMS has proposed to extend Stage 2 of the EHR Incentive Programs through 2016 and to begin Stage 3 in January 2017. The proposed new timeline will allow CMS and ONC to (1) focus efforts on the successful implementation of Stage 2 and (2) collect more data from Stage 2 implementation prior to developing Stage 3 requirements, which will focus on improving patient outcomes. CMS expects to release proposed Stage 3 requirements in the fall of 2014 and a final Stage 3 rule in the first half of 2015.
- ONC has proposed a new certification approach to EHR technology, which would allow more frequent updates to certification criteria to meet the definition of "Certified EHR Technology." ONC expects to publish a proposed rule for the 2015 edition of certification criteria that would address issues found in the 2014 edition and would assist in moving toward interoperability of EHR technology. Compliance with the 2015 edition will be voluntary and the 2014 edition will remain sufficient for meeting the definition of Certified EHR Technology.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the EHR Incentive Programs, please contact a member of [Robinson & Cole's Health Law Practice Group](#):

[Lisa M. Boyle](#)

[Theodore J. Tucci](#)

[Stephen W. Aronson](#)

[Charles W. Normand](#)

[Susan E. Roberts](#)

[Brian D. Nichols](#)

[Pamela H. Del Negro](#)

[Meaghan Mary Cooper](#)

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