

Update on 2012 Electronic Prescribing (eRx) Payment Adjustment

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) continues to receive inquiries around the Medicare Electronic Prescribing (eRx) Incentive Program and the 2012 eRx payment adjustment. As such, we are sending you this note to clarify some of the issues we have heard from the physician and other health care professional community.

Statutory Authority/Background

CMS is required to subject eligible professionals who are not successful electronic prescribers to a payment adjustment beginning in 2012. This requirement is outlined in Section 132 of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (P.L.110-275) (MIPPA).

We listed the requirements for being a successful e-prescriber for purposes of avoiding the 2012 payment adjustment in the 2011 Physician Fee Schedule final rule. In February 2012, all eligible professionals who did not meet these requirements were sent a letter notifying them of this fact.

Significant Hardship Exemption Requests

In response to stakeholder feedback, we also published a standalone eRx rule on September 6, 2011, to provide additional circumstances for eligible professionals to apply for a hardship exemption. Eligible professionals initially had until November 1, 2011, to submit a request for a hardship exemption via the newly-created Quality Reporting Communication Support Page for the 2012 eRx payment adjustment; however this deadline was later extended to November 8, 2011. We finished our review of these requests in February 2012 and are continuing to notify requestors via email whether their request was approved or denied.

Questions and Concerns

Although there is no appeal or review process established for the eRx Incentive Program and payment adjustment, we encourage eligible professionals with questions or concerns about the eRx payment adjustment and hardship exemption requests to contact our QualityNet Help Desk. We encourage you to contact the QualityNet Help Desk as soon as possible to make your concerns around the 2012 eRx payment adjustment known. Through the QualityNet Help Desk, we have been working with eligible professionals and CMS-selected group practices who have questions about eRx payment adjustments and/or hardship exemption decisions. We are handling all hardship exemption requests and any questions or concerns on a case-by-case basis. Eligible professionals should continue to contact the QualityNet Help Desk if they have issues relating to the eRx payment adjustment and/or the rationale for denial of their hardship exemption request.

The QualityNet Help Desk can be reached M-F; 7:00 am – 7:00 pm CMT at 866-288-8912 or via email at qnetsupport@sdps.org

2013 & 2014 eRx Payment Adjustment

Please note that payment adjustments under the eRx Incentive Program run until 2014. For information on how to avoid the 2013 and 2014 eRx payment adjustments, please visit our Web site at <http://www.cms.gov/eRxIncentive>. Specifically, eligible professionals should review the MLN Matters Article #SE1206, “[2012 eRx Incentive Program: Future Payment Adjustments](#)”.