

Thursday, May 21, 2009

HHS Outlines Plans for Health IT Incentive Payment Program

HHS has [unveiled its plan](#) for providing Medicare and Medicaid incentive payments for the "meaningful use" of electronic health records as authorized under the federal economic stimulus package, [Health Data Management](#) reports.

HHS announced that Medicare incentive payments to eligible hospitals will begin in October 2010, while Medicare incentive payments to physicians and Medicaid incentive payments to physicians and hospitals will begin in January 2011.

HHS Timeline

By the conclusion of 2009, HHS expects to have:

- Coordinated with the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT to create related policies for the incentive programs, including the definition of meaningful use
- Established proposed rules to permit public input on the incentive program policies
- Mapped out systems and other requirements to support the incentive programs
- Planned a national outreach program.

Meanwhile, by the end of 2010, HHS expects to have:

- Conducted outreach to eligible health care professionals, health care providers and state Medicaid agencies
- Developed systems to support the payment of incentives
- Developed final rules to establish policies to pay incentives
- Created systems to track and evaluate incentive payments (Goedert, *Health Data Management*, 5/20).