

## **Stimulus Update: Health IT Policy Committee Adopts Meaningful Use and Certification Recommendations**

In the past month, important steps have been taken toward the definition of meaningful use of an electronic health record (EHR), as well as certification and information exchange requirements to qualify for incentives under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

On July 16, the federal Health IT Policy Committee met to discuss public feedback on the Meaningful Use Workgroup's initial recommendations published in June. You can view the "[Meaningful Use Matrix](#)" on the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health IT Policy Committee Web site. The matrix sets forth goals, objectives and measurements for meaningful use beginning in 2011 — the first year physicians are eligible to apply for incentive payments. The Committee also discussed workgroup recommendations for information exchange and certification/adoption requirements.

McKesson executives attended the Committee meetings to understand the discussions that yielded the preliminary recommendations and final recommendations adopted by the Committee. In the Physician Practice Solutions group we are digging into the details and evaluating our EHR products against the recommended objectives. We will provide a stimulus update on the next VAR In the Know Call, scheduled for Monday, August 3, at 4:00 p.m. Eastern (details to be published in a separate e-mail). In the meantime, following are key points from the recent stimulus activities.

## Key Points

- McKesson is evaluating the revised meaningful use criteria and will submit comments and clarification questions once the process and comment period are defined.
- Based on recommendations adopted by the Health IT Policy Committee last week, we believe that certification of EHRs will be matched more closely to meaningful use criteria. The certification will be referred to as "HHS certification," and it will include requirements for security, privacy and interoperability. HHS certification only will focus on meeting the functional requirements of the stimulus statute to achieve meaningful use.
  - HHS certification does not exist today, and it will take time to develop. Thus, the health IT market will continue to rely on Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT) criteria as the de facto process.
  - McKesson has not changed its position on certifying its EHR solutions against CCHIT criteria until clear timelines are established for a new HHS certification process. Practice Partner Patient Records, Medisoft Clinical and Lytec MD are all CCHIT Certified® 08 Ambulatory EHR and meet the Certification Commission's criteria for office-based use.
- Interoperability remains a huge focus for the policy committee and will be required to qualify for economic stimulus funds. Patient data will need to be codified in a standard format and securely flow across care settings.
- According to law, the meaningful use criteria and certification recommendations accepted last week by the Health IT Policy

Committee must now be accepted or rejected by the Office of the National Coordinator. We expect further clarification will be needed and that it will be 60 days before a final ruling is made in early September. Then the recommendations will go to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and through its rule-making process. The final definitions for meaningful use and rules for certification are not expected until early 2010.

- We maintain that our award-winning, CCHIT-certified Practice Partner Patient Records solution and our Medisoft Clinical and Lytec MD EHR/practice management systems are well positioned to enable our customers to qualify for economic stimulus incentives.