

# EHR Decisions

Electronic Health Record (EHR) information and news

## Incentive programs established in Washington

by CCHIT STAFF

## National

### Bridges to Excellence: A quality-improvement recognition and rewards program for physicians

For its Physician Office Link program, [Bridges to Excellence](#) has deemed that a [CCHIT Certified® EHR](#) in a physician practice qualifies as sufficient evidence that it uses electronic systems to maintain patient records, provide decision support, enter orders for prescriptions and lab tests and provide patient reminders. The automatic qualification replaces a proof-of-use requirement that involved filling out an extensive survey. The implementation of a CCHIT Certified EHR makes physicians eligible for a bonus of \$50 per patient per year as long as they also meet thresholds for care of certain chronically ill populations in their practice, evidence that the EHR is being put to productive use. Physicians using a CCHIT Certified EHR also can gain recognition as a medical home provided they also meet thresholds for clinical care; the designation can be accompanied by incentives of up to \$125 per patient per year. The program is offered in 16 markets around the nation, including Washington state.

### Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

HRSA announced \$31.4 million in grants in August 2007 to help health centers adopt and implement EHRs and other health IT innovations. Includes:

- 25 grants totaling \$27 million at health centers and in networks that link multiple health centers.
- 8 grants totaling \$1 million to help health centers with planning to adopt EHR and other health IT.

In October 2008, HRSA announced:

- An additional \$14.3 million in grants to 12 health networks, clinics and other organizations for EHR implementation.
- \$4.6 million for other health IT projects.

Under HRSA's EHR selection guidelines, products must be verified as CCHIT Certified.

For more information, visit the [HRSA](#). Also see <http://www.govhealthit.com/online/news/350618-1.html>

### American College of Physicians (ACP), EHR Partners Program

Launched in June 2008, the program is designed to help ACP-member practicing physicians purchase and install EHR systems. It focuses solely on

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[A SHARED ROADMAP AND VISION FOR HEALTH IT](#)

Download "[A Shared Roadmap and Vision for Health IT](#)," a paper from  John D. Halamka, MD, MS; Mark Leavitt, MD, PhD; and John Tooker, MD, MBA, FACP.

[PHYSICIAN'S GUIDE TO CCHIT CERTIFICATION](#)

Updated to help physicians and practices understand the value of the latest o8 Ambulatory EHR criteria, the [Physician's Guide to CCHIT Certification](#) is designed to explain the benefits of certification and what more physicians need to consider when they are choosing EHRs. 

[CCHIT INCENTIVE INDEX](#)

The CCHIT Incentive Index™ is a constantly updated resource, tracking incentive programs that help physicians and clinics adopt certified EHR through financial assistance and incentives. 

Download the complete [CCHIT Incentive Index](#) or see [state-by-state offerings online](#).

practicing physicians purchase and install EHR systems. It focuses solely on EHRs that have achieved 2006 and/or 2007 certification by CCHIT. A new release dated June 11 says, "While there are many non-certified EHRs in use, ACP said it strongly recommends that physicians entering the EHR arena for the first time, or who are looking to upgrade older systems, consider certified EHRs." The program is a collaborative effort between ACP and 9 participating companies with CCHIT Certified products: e-MDs, GE Healthcare, Glenwood Systems, iSALUS, InteGreat, McKesson, MedInformatix, NextGen and Sage.

For more information, visit [ACP](#).

## Washington

**Washington Health Information Collaborative** is a public-private partnership comprising First Choice Health, a regional health system in Washington state and other parts of the Pacific Northwest; Washington State Health Care Authority, an independent cabinet-level agency; Puget Sound Alliance, a not-for-profit serving the five-county central Puget Sound region; and Qualis Health, a QIO. Partners combined for \$1 million in grants in 2007 to 52 clinics, physician practices and community HIT projects in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska. Another \$600,000 in grants were awarded in October 2008 to 28 physician practices and 3 community networks. A preference for CCHIT Certified products is expressed; certification is not required to be eligible.

Sources: [http://www.wahealthinfocollaborative.org/2008Grants\\_000.html](http://www.wahealthinfocollaborative.org/2008Grants_000.html);  
[http://www.wahealthinfocollaborative.org/documents/2007HealthITAwardRecipients\\_101507\\_000.pdf](http://www.wahealthinfocollaborative.org/documents/2007HealthITAwardRecipients_101507_000.pdf)

**Providence Health Plans** (covering the Portland, OR, area and southwest Washington state) has a merit pay system for providers comprising four criteria, one of which entails having a functional CCHIT Certified EHR in their office or being in the process of implementing one. The EHR merit gives providers a \$2 increase in a conversion factor that influences payment, which effectively amounts to a 3% pay increase. (For a provider with \$500,000 in payments from Providence Health Plans, this would represent a \$15,000 annual increase.) As of November 2008, 1,256 physicians are benefiting from the EHR incentive. Other merit criteria include use of an electronic billing mechanism, commitment to government (Medicare and Medicaid) programs, and performance on quality measures.

Source: Providence Health Plans; website is <http://www.providence.org/healthplans>.

**Medical Protective**, professional liability insurer, Fort Wayne, IN Will award a 2.5% discount for practices with a CCHIT Certified EHR when used as a medical risk-reduction tool. Must be running at least 1 year, and at least 90% of providers in a practice must use it. Proof of beneficial use of the EHR in practice activities is determined by a comprehensive questionnaire; he practice also must be able to run reports and submit them to demonstrate it understands how to translate EHR capabilities into actionable information on preventing medical errors. if the proof is demonstrated, the discount is awarded for 3 years, after which eligibility must be renewed in a process that evaluates usage and updating of the EHR. Coverage is available in every state except Alaska and Hawaii.

Source: Medical Protective; see the website for more information at <http://www.medpro.com/web/physician/risk-management>.

**Programs taking advantage of Stark exception, anti-kickback safe harbor:**

**Northwest Hospital, Seattle, WA**

- Vendor selected: Allscripts
- Physicians affected: Deployed initially to 50, plans to offer to additional 250
- Financial investment: Not disclosed

Source: <http://www.healthcareitnews.com/story.cms?id=7693>

### **Stevens Hospital, Edmonds, WA**

- Vendor selected: GE Centricity
- Physicians affected: Not disclosed
- Financial investment: Not disclosed

Source:

[http://www.healthdatamanagement.com/news/Stark\\_subsidy27426-1.html](http://www.healthdatamanagement.com/news/Stark_subsidy27426-1.html)