



TEXAS HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

THOMAS M. SUEHS
EXECUTIVE COMMISSIONER

Name
Address
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Under the provisions of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act, which was enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the Texas Medicaid Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Program provides financial incentives to certain healthcare professionals and hospitals that meet specific eligibility requirements when they adopt and meaningfully use certified EHR technology.

Incentives are being offered by both Medicare and Medicaid, with each program providing different incentive amounts and different criteria for participating. Medicare is offering \$44,000 over a five-year period and Medicaid is offering \$63,750 over six years. Texas Medicaid is offering this incentive program to eligible Medicaid providers to help improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of healthcare services.

The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services created 62 Regional Extension Centers (RECs) nationwide. RECs are supported and directed by the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC). The mission of the RECs is to help priority primary care providers (Family Practice, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, OB/Gyn) adopt and implement an EHR system, use it meaningfully, and assist in the application process for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) incentive monies.

RECs are designed to address unique community requirements and to provide on-site technical assistance to providers adopting certified EHR systems. The goal of the program is to provide education, outreach, and support services to help Texas primary care providers achieve meaningful EHR use within two years. RECs may also provide educational support to other providers who may need local guidance.

Under the State Cooperative Agreements of the HITECH Act, regional extension centers operate as independent resources to assist providers. Texas RECs are physician-centric, with a 50 percent board governance of practicing physicians. Additionally, they are vendor-neutral and will help providers find the best EHR for the best value.

Texas Medicaid encourages Medicaid providers to actively engage local RECs to receive assistance and technical support for this program. There are four RECs in the state of Texas. For more information and to find a local REC, please visit www.txrecs.org.

A REC can answer the following questions:

- Is my practice ready for an EHR?
- Which EHR should I choose?
- What type of training will I need?
- How do I install an EHR with minimal disruption?
- How does an EHR earn Medicare/Medicaid incentives?
- How can I qualify for incentives with my existing EHR?

For providers who already have an EHR system, REC consultants can focus on quality improvement measures such as: workflow analysis and process redesign, best practices suggestions, and meaningful use gap analysis to help achieve meaningful use. For those who do not have an EHR and are not sure where to begin, REC technical assistance experts can help narrow down the selection of EHR vendors to help providers make an informed decision as to which system is best for their practice.

Please visit the following websites for more information and future updates:

Texas Regional Extension Centers (RECs):

- Texas Regional Extension Centers: www.txrecs.org
- Gulf Coast Regional Extension Center (GCREC) <http://www.uhouston.edu/gcrec/index.htm>
- CenturEast Regional Extension Center (CEREC) <http://www.centreastrec.org/>
- North Texas Regional Extension Center (NTRREC) <http://www.ntrrec.org/>
- Texas Tech University Health Science Center <http://www.wtxhitrrec.org/>

Texas Medicaid EHR Incentive Program:

http://www.tmhp.com/Pages/HealthIT/HTT_Home.aspx

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission:

www.jhsc.state.tx.us

To receive updates on health information technology, click on the link for “Sign up for E-mail Updates” on the left-hand side of the homepage. It will give you an option to request updates on health information technology.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS):

<http://www.cms.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms>

Office of the National Coordinator (ONC):

<http://healthit.hhs.gov/programs/rec>

I appreciate your ongoing dedication to deliver the highest quality medical care for Medicaid clients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen M. Costello". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and a long, sweeping tail.

Kathleen Costello
Interim Director, Health Information Technology
Medicaid and CHIP
Texas Health and Human Services Commission