



## Frequently Asked Questions

Recommendations on Meaningful Use from the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT  
August 14, 2009

### ***What were the exact criteria recommended by the Meaningful Use workgroup of the Health IT Policy Committee in the draft as released?***

Click [here](#) to see the Meaningful Use Summary.

### ***Is this the final ruling on Meaningful Use?***

The work done by the Health IT Policy Committee on defining Meaningful Use is simply a recommendation to CMS. CMS' initial ruling will likely be similar given the cross-functional work ONC and CMS are doing, but the "real" criteria and Notice / Request for Public Comment are not expected until December 2009. The documents released on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009, provided us with a sense of the general direction we will be going in, but it should be reviewed with the appropriate perspective.

### ***What has been announced regarding standards and/or certification?***

While there has been directional work done by the Certification workgroup of the Health IT Policy Committee, the bulk of work in this area is being done by the Health IT Standards Committee, a separate group reporting recommendations to David Blumenthal and Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. This Committee will make recommendations to the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC), who will then be responsible for crafting the official rules and issuing for comment in December 2009.

### ***Do we have any sense what Meaningful Use is going to mean for Allscripts products?***

The requirements for EHR functionality as outlined in the recommended criteria will be achievable by Allscripts, not only because of what we're seeing in the early recommended rules for Meaningful Use but because we are committed to ensuring that we meet all standards and certification requirements. In fact, the products we sell today already have the capability to deliver robust Electronic Health Record functionality and even potentially exceed what is required within the Meaningful Use rules.

### ***What are the thresholds going to be for the various measures?***

The measures are not yet quantitatively defined. For example, while we know there will be a measure related to the percentage of lab orders and results that are managed electronically, the Health IT Policy Committee didn't include in their recommendations a proposed threshold that would be required to qualify for Meaningful Use. We will carefully monitor future activities here so that as more details become available, we can accurately assess what will be required.

### ***What other hints are there about future evolutions of Meaningful Use?***

1. The group wants the quality measures information to be defined by clinical, not claims, information. The idea is to take current measures already under watch and tweak them as early as this year so they are clinically-derived. Additionally, they are going to recommend implementation of "two-for" measures as much as possible by tracking components that are already part of P4P efforts or other similar programs so the organization or Eligible Provider can benefit twice from the effort.
2. There is an intent to be aggressive in the area of criteria related to patients & families because of the importance of increased patient engagement, with related recommendations rapid ramp-up of standards and certification related to patient interfaces (PHRs or other portals). The same is true for the data transition point with public health organizations.

### ***What special issues did the Policy Committee highlight in consideration of Meaningful Use?***

The workgroup specified that they intend to be mindful of the issues of small practices in this endeavor, and to balance the urgency of health reform with the calendar time needed to implement an EHR / HIE project of this scale.



***What are next steps?***

CMS will be writing the rules related to Meaningful Use and other elements of the HITECH and ARRA legislation that require further clarification and will be releasing a Notice of Public Rule Making in December 2009. The final rule is anticipated after all comments are reviewed in mid-Spring.

***What is Allscripts' reaction to the recommendations on Meaningful Use from ONC?***

Allscripts applauds the Vision behind the draft of Meaningful Use and the commitment to articulate measurements associated with our collective goals of improving healthcare delivery in this country. However, regarding the specific criteria as recommended, we believe that we risk missing President Obama's vision and spending billions of dollars on health IT-related projects without the desired results unless we collectively agree to step up to the task. This will require all of us to agree to move out of our comfort zones – vendors and providers alike – and make a commitment to meeting challenging measures that, year after year, move us forward rapidly in putting technology to use not for its own sake, but as part of a larger effort to protect and connect both patients and physicians.