

What To Expect In 2012

Forecast of changes on the horizon for 2012



Looking at the new year, there will be both opportunities and challenges facing medical practices. We will look at three that will be on the horizon in 2012.

Meaningful Use — The challenge for many practices who have decided to implement an EHR in order to receive the CMS incentives. That requires successfully achieving attestation compliance in order to receive the \$18,000 available in Stage 1. Ensuring eligible providers actually meet the criteria will be a challenge for many practices who find physicians reluctance in migrating to an EHR.

Some practices may find it necessary to offer additional training in order to get providers up to a level of compliance. e-MDs along with other leading EHR have developed meaningful use reports that can aid in determining how many and what areas of the criteria are actually being met.

ACO — 2012 may bring increased interest in CMS's Accountable Care Organization (ACO), that offer incentives to groups of doctors, hospitals or other health related organizations. The purpose of an ACO is for voluntary parties to come together in the coordination of care for Medicare patients. CMS offers several ACO programs including: Medicare Shared Savings Program, Advanced Payment Initiative, and Pioneer ACO model.

CMS has been hosting sessions to help interested organizations learn more about the options available and steps required to participate in one of the options available.

ICD-10 — On October 1, 2013 the entire US health system will shift from ICD-9 to ICD-10. Experts say this will be the largest and most expensive change since Y2K over a decade ago. If this remains to become the date for transition the healthcare industry must be prepared. This means that medical practices will need to monitor their software vendors to ensure that ICD-10 will be embedded within their software. The consequence of not having it incorporated will mean all claims would be rejected causing an interruption in cash-flow and potentially a loss of income for practices who find their software vendor not prepared.

2012 will likely prove to be an interesting year for the healthcare.

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