

**Backgrounder on Health Information Technology
State of Nebraska**

Registration for the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Program is Now Open

- Beginning on January 3, 2011, eligible health care professionals and hospitals who wish to participate in the Medicare Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Program can now register
- Registration for the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program is also now available in 11 states and is expected to be available in an additional three states in February.
http://www.cms.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/40_MedicaidStateInfo.asp
- Eligible professionals can receive as much as \$44,000 over a five-year period under the Medicare EHR Incentive Program, and as much as \$63,750 over six years under the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program
- Under both Medicare and Medicaid, eligible hospitals may receive millions of dollars for implementing and meaningfully using certified EHR technology
- These programs were brought about by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act, which authorizes total incentive payments of as much as \$27 billion over ten years for the adoption and meaningful use of EHRs

Health IT Improves Health and Health Care

With the help of the “meaningful use” of health IT, health care providers will have:

- Accurate and complete information about a patient's health. That way they can give the best possible care, whether during a routine visit or a medical emergency.
- The ability to better coordinate the care they give. This is especially important if a patient has a serious medical condition.
- A way to securely share information with patients and their family caregivers for patients who opt for this convenience
- Information to help doctors diagnose health problems sooner, reduce medical errors, and provide safer care at lower costs.

Several Programs are Available to Support the Transition to EHRs

Several resources are available to support providers with the transition to EHRs:

- CMS' [Official Web Site for the Medicare and Medicaid Incentive Programs](#), offers a step-by-step registration guide and important information about eligibility
- The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) offers a frequently updated [Certified Product List](#), including more than 230 certified EHR systems or modules
- Sixty-two Regional Extension Centers supported by ONC are offering hands-on assistance to help providers make the transition to EHRs
- ONC's State Health Information Exchange Program facilitates innovative approaches to the secure exchange of health information to support meaningful use of EHRs
- The Beacon Community Program is showing how health IT can contribute to break-through advancements in quality, safety and efficiency
- ONC's many Workforce Development Programs are expanding the number of highly skilled health IT workers who will be ready to help providers implement EHRs

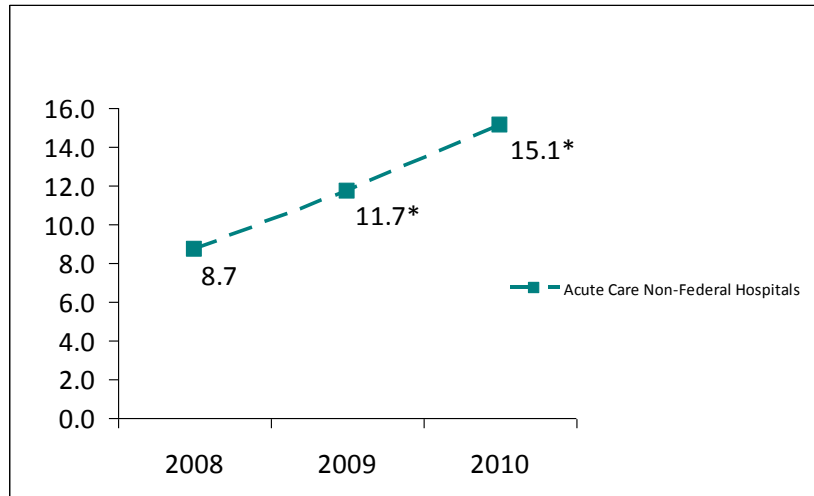
Important Facts about EHR adoption and the EHR Incentive Program

Recent Survey Findings
Nationwide and Nebraska

Acute Care Hospitals

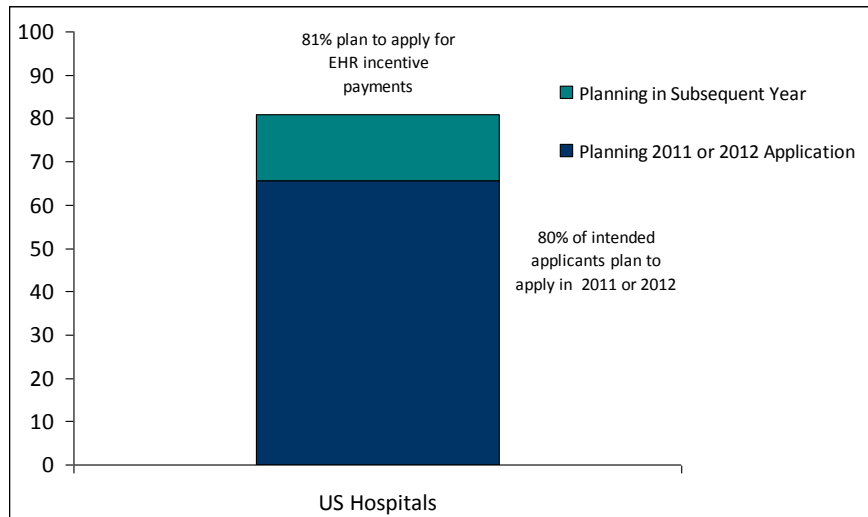
- According to the most recent results of the American Hospital Association's Survey of IT adoption, 15.1 percent of acute care non-federal hospitals have adopted at least a "basic" EHR. This represents growth of nearly 75% since 2008.
- In addition, 80.8 percent of acute care non-federal hospitals plan to apply for EHR incentive payments. Of those hospitals, 80.1 percent plan to apply in 2011 or 2012.¹

Figure 1. Percent of Acute Care Non-Federal Hospitals With at Least a "Basic" Electronic Health Record (2008 2010)²



*Significantly above previous year estimate at $p \leq 0.05$

Figure 2. Percent of Acute Care Non-Federal Hospitals Planning to Apply for EHR Incentive Payments



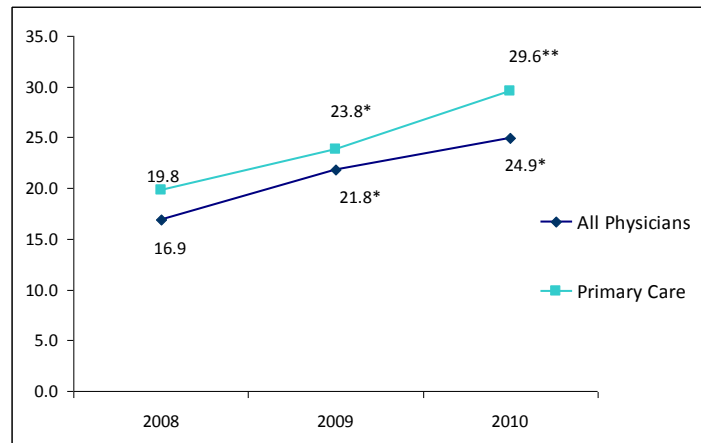
In Nebraska, according to the same source:

- Approximately 9 percent (+/-4%) of acute care non-federal hospitals report having at least a "basic" EHR in place.
- Approximately 81 percent (+/-6%) plan to apply for EHR incentive payments.

Office-based Physicians

- According to the most recent results from the National Center for Health Statistics Survey of IT adoption in physician practices, 24.9 percent of office-based physicians have adopted at least a “basic” electronic health record. This represents growth of nearly 50% since 2008.
- Growth in electronic health record adoption was strongest among primary care physicians last year, 29.6 percent of whom have now adopted at least a basic EHR.
- In addition, 41.1 percent of office based physicians plan to apply for EHR incentive payments. Of those physicians, 79.1 percent plan to apply in 2011 or 2012.¹

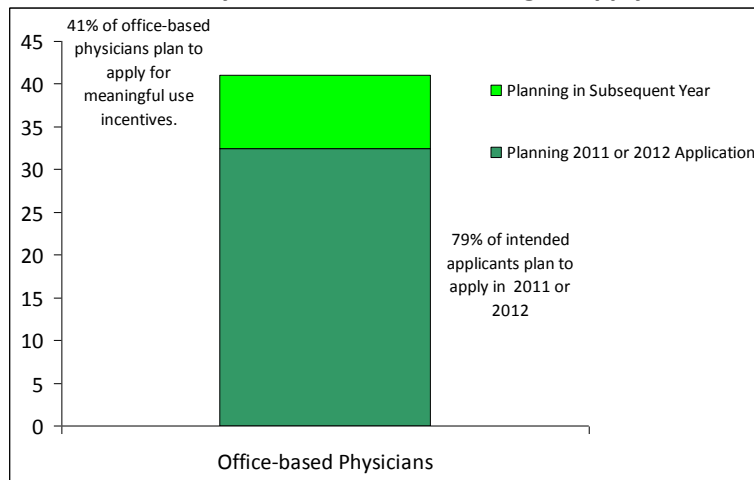
Figure 3. Percent of Office-Based Physicians Who have Adopted at Least a “Basic” Electronic Health Record²



* Significantly above 2008 estimate at $p \leq 0.05$

** Significantly above 2009 and 2010 all physician estimates at $p \leq 0.05$

Figure 4. Percent of Office-Based Physicians Who are Planning to Apply for EHR Incentive Payments



In Nebraska, according to the same source:

- Approximately 28 percent of office-based physicians have at least a “basic” EHR in their practices. The estimated adoption rate among primary care physicians is 27 percent.
- An estimated 44 percent of office-based physicians plan to apply for EHR incentive payments.

¹ Hospital Source: American Hospital Association Information Technology Survey, 2008-2010. Physician Source: National Center for Health Statistics, National Ambulatory Medical Center Survey, 2008-2010.

² “Basic” electronic health records are defined as electronic capability for managing: **Physicians:** Patient demographic information, patient problem lists, patient medication lists, clinical notes, orders for prescriptions, and viewing laboratory and imaging results; **Hospitals:** Patient demographic information, physicians’ notes, nursing assessments, patient problem lists, patient medication lists, discharge summaries, lab and radiologic reports, diagnostic test results, and orders for medications. They are defined in the following sources: **Physicians:** Hsiao CJ, et al. Electronic Medical Record/Electronic Health Record Systems of Office-based Physicians: United States, 2009 and Preliminary 2010 State Estimates Health E Stats. National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control. **Hospitals:** Jha AK, et al. Use of Electronic Health Records in U.S. Hospitals. *N Engl J Med.* 2009 360;16

Health Information Technology Resources in Nebraska

Several resources and tools are available from the Department of Health and Human Services to support providers as they make the transition to EHR adoption and meaningful use.

Guidance on the Medicare and Medicaid Incentive Programs

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has an [Official Web Site for the Medicare and Medicaid Incentive Programs](#), which offers a range of resources and guidance to support providers with understanding eligibility and requirements for, and guidance on the registration process, including:

- Registration User Guides
- Interactive Eligibility Decision Tool
- Stage 1 EHR Meaningful Use Specification Sheets
- Video on EHR Program Basics
- Registration Video (coming soon)

Certification Program

Eligible professionals and eligible hospitals who seek to qualify for incentive payments under the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs are required by statute to use Certified EHR Technology. Certification of health IT will provide assurance to purchasers and other users that an EHR system, or other relevant technology, offers the necessary technological capability, functionality, and security to help them meet the meaningful use criteria established within the Incentive Programs. The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) offers a frequently updated [Certified Product List](#), which as of this writing, includes more than 230 certified EHR systems or modules.

Regional Extension Center Program

ONC has funded 62 Regional Extension Centers (RECs) to help primary care providers and critical access hospitals meaningfully use electronic health records (EHRs). REC services include outreach and education, EHR support, and technical assistance in implementing health IT and using it in a meaningful way to improve care. Contact information for the REC(s) in your state is provided below.

Wide River Technology Extension Center, Lincoln, NE, www.widerivertec.org

Key Contact: Greg Schieke, info@widerivertec.org, 402.476.1700

State Health Information Exchange Program

The State Health Information Exchange Cooperative Agreements Program promotes innovative approaches to the secure exchange of health information within and across states. Demonstrating the secure sharing of information among providers is an essential part of using EHRs in a meaningful way to qualify for the Medicare and Medicaid Incentive Programs. Contact information for the State Health Information Exchange Program in your state is provided below.

State of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE

State Health IT Coordinators: Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy, Rick.Sheehy@nebraska.gov or Anne Byers anne.byers@nebraska.gov

Health IT Workforce Development Programs

As the nation moves toward a more technologically advanced health care system, providers are going to need highly skilled health IT experts to support them in the adoption and meaningful use of electronic health records. To help address this growing demand, ONC's Health IT Workforce Development Programs are training a new workforce of health IT professionals who will be ready to help providers implement electronic health records to improve health care quality, safety, and cost-effectiveness. An overview of programs in your state is provided below.

The Community College Consortia Program

- Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, NE
 - <http://www.mccneb.edu/hitp/>

CMS Medicaid EHR Incentive Program

The Medicaid EHR Incentive Program is a voluntary program established by Congress, but administered individually by each State and territory. States may receive 90% federal matching funds to administer their Medicaid EHR Incentive Program and 100% federal funds for payments up to \$63,750 over six years for eligible professionals and base payments of \$2 million for qualifying hospitals. While CMS currently estimates that every State will have an EHR Incentive Program in the future, the preparation for the program varies from State to State. Below is the estimated date your State intends to begin accepting registrations for their Medicaid EHR Incentive Program

Expected Launch date: Fall 2011

Website: <http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/med/EHR.htm>