

2016 PQRS Group Practice Registration Open

Although 2016 may be the final year of the PQRS program, it is a critical year. Providers and group practices that do not satisfy PQRS requirements in 2016 face up to a **6% reduction** in Medicare payments in 2018. Providers can avoid the PQRS penalty by using the PQRS group practice reporting option (GPRO) to report quality data as individuals or collectively as a group practice. Those practices wishing to participate using GPRO for the 2016 year must register by June 30, 2016 via the Physician Value-PQRS registration system. New in 2016, group practices may report quality metrics via a qualified clinical data registry. Complete information and step-by-step instructions for registering in the PQRS GPRO are provided on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS') PQRS GPRO Registration web page.

HIPAA Audit Program

Physician practices, health plans, clearinghouses and business associates will be facing a new phase of audits by The Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights (OCR). These audits will assess compliance with HIPAA Privacy, Security and Breach Notification Rules. For 2016, OCR will review selected organizations' policies and procedures that are adopted and deployed to meet selected standards and implementation specifications of HIPAA regulations. These will largely be "desk audits". However, OCR indicates that some on-site audits will be conducted. The results of the audits conducted by OCR will be used to develop tools and guidance to assist the industry in compliance self-evaluation and in preventing breaches of patient information.

Additional ICD-10 Codes Released

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) along with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will add new ICD-10 diagnosis codes to be used on healthcare claims. Starting October 1, 2016, there will be 1,943 new diagnosis codes, 422 revised codes and 305 deleted codes impacting physician practices. CMS froze the code set updates to reduce the burden on providers implementing ICD-10 on Oct. 1, 2015. It is expected that there will now be yearly updates to the ICD-10 code set.

Questions? Please call Angie at 915-774-5506.

1. MGMA, Week of March 23, 2016, *MGMA Washington Connection*
2. CMS.gov
3. MGMA, Week of April 06, 2016, *MGMA Washington Connection*

