



News Release

NUMBER: 12-09
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 14, 2012

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CALIFORNIA HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS PARTICIPATING IN ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD INCENTIVE PROGRAM RECEIVE \$743 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDS

Program Aims to Modernize Health Care Delivery and Improve Quality, Safety and Efficiency

SACRAMENTO – State officials announced today that \$743 million in incentive payments have been issued to Medi-Cal and Medicare providers in California through a federally-funded electronic health record (EHR) incentive program. The effort aims to modernize the state's health care system by enabling vital patient information to be securely managed electronically, improving health care quality, safety and efficiency.

More than 4,800 Medi-Cal professionals and 196 hospitals across California have received incentive payments through the California Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) EHR Incentive Program, which is funded by the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Since the California EHR Incentive Program began in October 2011, California Medi-Cal providers and hospitals have received more than \$388 million in total payments.

"The EHR Incentive Program will have a profound impact on the ability of professionals and hospitals to provide high-quality care for their patients," said Dr. Linette Scott, DHCS' Chief Medical Information Officer. "It will ensure that a patient's health care is coordinated wherever and whenever services are needed."

On the Medicare side, more than 13,200 California providers and hospitals participate in the Medicare and Medicare Advantage EHR Incentive Program and have received more than \$355 million in total payments. Medicare and Medicare Advantage incentive payments are made by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in Washington, D.C.

With leadership from the California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS), a coalition of groups called the California eHealth Initiative is working to improve the accuracy and efficiency of health care. The initiative encompasses health information technology, EHR, telemedicine and electronic health information exchange (HIE).

In a letter recognizing September 10-14 as Health Information Technology Week, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. noted that the state's efforts will increase patient safety, reduce medical errors and help to create technology jobs in California. The letter and a series of brief video interviews with eHealth leaders are available at www.ehealth.ca.gov.

Connecting EHR through HIE is an important component of statewide efforts to improve the quality, safety and efficiency of health care. "The benefits of the EHR Incentive Program are much more than economic for California's providers and patients," said Pamela Lane, Deputy Secretary of the Health Information Exchange at CHHS. "Ultimately, the quality of care for millions of patients will be greatly improved as vital health information becomes more accessible and is securely shared among providers."

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Below is more detailed information about providers who joined the EHR Incentive Program and the incentive payments received in various areas of the state, as of September 3, 2012:

- San Francisco Bay Area – more than 1,200 providers received a total of \$75.8 million.
- Los Angeles Area – more than 940 providers received a total of \$100.9 million.
- Inland Empire Area – more than 818 providers received a total of \$40.6 million.
- San Diego Area – more than 539 providers received a total of \$30 million.
- San Joaquin Valley Area – more than 482 providers received a total of \$43.3 million.
- Sacramento Valley Area – more than 223 providers received a total of \$17.1 million.

"We knew that moving from paper-based charts to an EHR system would greatly improve the care we provide to our patients," said Allan Siefkin, chief medical officer for U.C. Davis Medical Center. "The EHR Incentive program helped us to improve clinical outcomes for our patients, comply with state and federal regulations, improve clinical work flows and increase the completeness and timeliness of patient information."

For more information about California's EHR Incentive Program, please log on to <http://medi-cal.ehr.ca.gov/>. Information about HIE and other eHealth initiatives may be found at www.ehealth.ca.gov.

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