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'Meaningful use' to be defined in three stages

By Jay A. Shorr, CMBM, CAC

Q: What is the real definition of meaningful use?


A: Meaningful use is a set of criteria that the federal government has established to define the terms, conditions, and standards that an electronic health records (EHR) system must have. It is intended to describe the use of health information technology that leads to improvements in care and furthers the goals of information exchange among healthcare professionals. To become "meaningful users," providers need to demonstrate they're using certified EHR technology in ways that can be measured in terms of quantity and quality. There are three main components of meaningful use:

- the use of a certified EHR in a meaningful manner, such as e-prescribing;
- the use of certified EHR technology for electronic exchange of health information to improve quality of healthcare; and
- the use of certified EHR technology to submit clinical quality and other measures.

The detailed definition of meaningful use will be rolled out in three stages through 2015.

Answers to readers' questions were provided by Jay A. Shorr, BA, CMBM, CAC, of The Best Medical Business Solutions, Tamarac, Florida. Send your technology-related questions to medec@advanstar.com [medec@advanstar.com]



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