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CMS EHR DEMO PROJECT: OCTOBER UPDATE/AUDIO-CONFERENCE

CMS will hold a series of Open Door sessions to discuss the CMS EHR Demonstration Project and answer any questions physicians may have.

PURPOSE: Applications to participate in the demonstration project MUST be received by November 26th. This call is open to anyone interested in learning more about the demonstration and there is no pre-registration.

DATES/TIMES: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2008 7:30 am to 9:00 am
 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2008 3:30 pm to 5
 TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2008 7:30 am to 9:00am
 TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2008 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm

TOLL-FREE DIAL-IN NUMBER: 1- 888-677-3370

PARTICIPANT PASSCODE: EHR DEMO

REVIEW OF THE PROJECT: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is implementing a five-year demonstration project that will encourage small- to medium-sized primary care physician practices to use electronic health records (EHR) to improve the quality of patient care.

Over the five-year demonstration project, financial incentives will be provided to as many as 1,200 primary care physician practices in 12 different areas across the country that use CCHIT-certified EHRs to manage their patient's care. Incentive payments will be offered based on how the EHR is used as well as for the reporting and performance on 26 clinical quality measures related to the care of diabetes, congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease and the provision of preventive health services. Potential payments under the demonstration for all five years may be up to \$58,000 per physician, with a maximum \$290,000 per practice.

The Maryland/DC Physician EHR Demonstration Collaborative (Collaborative) was formed to assist CMS in implementing this five-year demonstration project. The Maryland and DC Academies of Family Physicians have joined MedChi, the Maryland

Health Care Commission (MHCC) and the DC Medical Society to promote EHR adoption through outreach, education and recruitment of small to medium sized primary care physician practices in the Maryland/DC region to participate in this demonstration.

INTERPRETER RESOURCES PROJECT AND PHYSICIAN SURVEY

With support from the Quality Health Foundation, the Center for a Healthy Maryland (CHM) will create a web-based database of linguistic resources to help physicians address the language needs of their patients. To this end, CHM is surveying physicians regarding language and cultural differences among their patients and barriers to effective communication, as well as resources needed. The survey can be found at healthymaryland.org/documents/2008surveyfinal_3_000.doc. Please complete and fax back the one-page survey by October 31, 2008.

THE ROBERT GRAHAM CENTER OFFERS TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS

The Robert Graham Center for Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary care is pleased to share with you two recent publications (request copies from the MAFP office at info@mdafp.org):

1. "Impact of Title VII Training Programs on Community Health Center Staffing and National Health Service Corps Participation" - This study evaluates the associated effects on physician staffing of these vital safety net programs and appears in the September issue of the Annals of Family Medicine. This study offers objective evidence about the threatened Title VII funding streams and joins the soon to be released special issue of Academic Medicine on Title VII slated to come out in November.
2. "Primary Care's Eroding Earnings: Is Congress concerned?" - This is a qualitative study of key staff in the US Congress, OMB, GAO and MedPAC to understand their current perceptions of primary care, payment disparities, and Medicare reform. It appears in the September issue of the Journal of Family Practice.

NEWLY ISSUED PRACTICE ADVISORY REGARDING 2008 CHANGES IN HIV/AIDS COUNSELING AND TESTING LAWS

Effective July 1, 2008, Maryland law modified the HIV testing process in the areas of:

- Obtaining Informed Consent for an HIV test;
- Providing Pre-Test Counseling;
- Providing Test Results and Referrals (Post-Test Session);
- Notifying Sexual and Needle Sharing Partners; and
- Working with Pregnant Women.

The Maryland AIDS Administration has issued this PRACTICE ADVISORY FOR HIV TESTING PROCESS IN MARYLAND in order to guide clinicians in implementing the changes in law.

www.healthymaryland.org/documents/HIVTestingPracticeAdvisoryAug2008FINAL_001.pdf

Practitioners in all health care settings are recommended to offer HIV testing as part of routine clinical care (screening) for individuals aged 13-64 years. Individuals known to be at higher risk, typically defined on the basis of behavior, clinical, or demographic characteristics, should be tested at least annually. It is important to note that although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued guidelines on HIV testing in healthcare settings, those recommendations do not supersede Maryland law and regulations. If there is any incongruence between CDC's recommendations and Maryland law, State law must be followed. Please visit the Maryland AIDS Administration's Website for more information on the Legislation, at www.dhmh.state.md.us/AIDS/Law/HB991.htm.

YOUR HELP NEEDED WITH PHYSICIAN PRACTICE INFORMATION STUDY

We need your help! AAFP, AMA and more than 70 other organizations are conducting a comprehensive multi-specialty survey of America's physician practices. Results from the study will be used to positively influence national decision makers. The section of the survey pertaining to your practice expenses is particularly important, and we request that you complete it accurately in its entirety if you receive it. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has indicated it will use the results of the study to determine physician payment. The AMA survey firm will contact randomly selected physicians and practice managers to collect responses. All responses will remain confidential.

To date, family medicine has 121 completed surveys, which represents only 44% of the number desired by the survey firm. Many other specialties have well over 100% of the number desired by the survey firm. Please help ensure that our specialty will benefit from this survey effort. Please let your staffs know that you would like to participate in this survey and convey the importance of accepting incoming calls, faxes or emails from the AMA survey firm "dmrkynetec." If you have been selected to participate in this important effort and have any questions about this survey, please call toll-free at (877) 816-8940 and ask to speak with one of dmrkynetec's executive interviewers about the 2008 Physician Practice Information Survey.

Not sure if you were selected for the survey? Find out if you have been selected to participate in the survey by visiting the [Physician Practice Information Survey Web site](#) and entering your name and zip code. If you have been selected, the Web site will provide instructions for helping you begin preparations for participating in the survey. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. For questions, AAFP members and Chapters can contact Kent Moore at AAFP at kmoore@aaafp.org or 800-274-2237, ext. 4170.

HAVE YOU SIGNED UP TO BE DOCTOR OF THE DAY?

MedChi is now beginning to staff the First Aid Room in Annapolis for the coming session. The First Aid Room, located in the basement of the State House, is equipped with oxygen, hospital bed, wheelchair, crutches, thermometers, stethoscope, and blood pressure cuff. A nurse is also on the premises every day and rarely do you encounter

anything more than colds or the flu, so that the Physician of the Day can spend some time in the chambers observing the Senate and House conducting the work of our state government. There are also a variety of over-the-counter medications provided including aspirin, cough and cold preparations, and antacids. Volunteers are asked to bring their own prescription pads in the event treatment requires prescribed medication.

Please take a day to help with this project. It is actually fun and very interesting. We hope you will volunteer this year. Emeritus physicians who have active licenses are encouraged to participate. They were an enormous help last year.

Volunteers may wish to speak with the senator or delegates from their own district while serving in this capacity, in which case Stephanie Wisniewski would be helpful in making the connection. She will provide briefing materials that will aid volunteers in speaking knowledgeably to their legislators on MedChi agenda items.

The legislative session runs from Wednesday, January 14, 2009, through Monday, April 13. Time slots consist of Monday evenings from 5 to 9 pm, and Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9 am to 5 pm throughout the session (most legislators leave after lunch on Friday). There will also be a schedule of hearings and meetings that deal with health-related issues posted right in the First Aid Room. Volunteers are encouraged to sit in on these meetings as well.

If you are interested in participating, please feel free to contact Stephanie Wisniewski, 410-263-4035 or 301-858-5230, legislative.medchi@erols.com. A fax back form may be downloaded at www.medchi.org.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

- Medical schools, journals fight industry influence - AP/Yahoo News, September 11, 2008
“Recent articles and editorials in major medical journals blast the industry while accusing drugmakers of deceiving the public, manipulating doctors, and putting profits before patients. Medical schools, teaching hospitals, and physician groups are also changing rules to limit the influence of pharmaceutical sales reps. As more voices have called for change, new guidelines for how drugmakers and doctors should interact are coming from both industries. But the industries' dealings remain fraught with potential conflict because the sectors depend on each other so much.”
http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080911/ap_on_he_me/doctors_vs_drugmakers;_ylt=AIsvOPMMI2DcuzPnpRELgqxZ24cA
- Google and Microsoft look to change healthcare - New York Times, September 18, 2008
“Google and Microsoft have begun working on plans to improve the nation's healthcare. The two will combine the Web's resources, online health records, and enhanced Internet search tools to ultimately help people make better choices when it comes to their healthcare.”

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/14/technology/14healthnet.html?_r=2&scp=3&sq=business,%20healthcare&st=cse&oref=slogin&oref=slogin

- Design teams unveil personal health record prototypes - Project HealthDesign, September 19, 2008
“A \$5 million Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program to develop innovative applications for personal health records unveiled nine prototype designs. The applications marry technology with information recorded from users’ daily lives to produce action-oriented feedback for managing their health. They range from a medication management system to help children with cystic fibrosis manage their disease to a computerized tool that helps people with congestive heart failure manage their health from home.”
<http://www.projecthealthdesign.org/news/217129>
- Family physicians move beyond health care IT basics - Healthcare IT, September 18, 2008
“An IT expert with the American Academy of Family Physicians says 42% of the group's members have adopted electronic health records and 11% are in the implementation process. **Jason Mitchell, MD**, assistant director of the AAFP's Center for Health Information Technology, said AAFP-affiliated family practice physicians are beginning to "move beyond" discussions about IT adoption and implementation, and are instead talking about how best to utilize healthcare IT tools. "We're at the stage where members want to look at what types of EHR features are the best for family practice," he said. “
<http://www.healthcareitnews.com/story.cms?id=9992>
- Kaiser, Mid Atlantic top managed-care rankings - BaltimoreSun.com, September 23, 2008
“Kaiser Permanente and Mid Atlantic Medical Services Inc. ranked highest in an annual report of managed-care insurers published yesterday by the Maryland Health Care Commission.

The report acts as a guide for consumers hoping to make sense of the region's vast array of insurers. For 12 years, the commission has produced the "report card," which offers rankings on such matters as breast cancer screening, diabetes care and the quality and efficiency of behavioral health care. The scores are determined from a combination of questionnaires filled out by the companies and from health plan records. A separate group of scores measures how much care was given and the processes the insurers use to send reminders to members about checkups.”

http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/health/bal-md.br.health23sep23_0.4303662.story

- Everything You Need to Know About E-Prescribing
Health Leaders Media, October 14, 2008
“The practice of prescribing medications electronically has been getting a good amount of attention recently. For those providers who either remain baffled by how e-prescribing works or aren't convinced the switch is worth the trouble, the eHealth Initiative last week announced the publication of a "how-to" guide for clinicians looking to make the switch.”
http://www.healthleadersmedia.com/content/221557/topic/WS_HLM2_TE_C/Everything-You-Need-to-Know-About-EPrescribing.html

- The World Health Organization released its World Health Report 2008 on Oct. 14th. The report assesses the way that health care is organized, financed, and delivered in rich and poor countries around the world, and calls for a return to primary health care. The report, titled "Primary health care – Now more than ever" can be found at
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2008/pr38/en/index.html>

SAVE THE DATES FOR MAFP'S 2009 CME CONFERENCES

February 21: Winter Regional Conference

Loews Annapolis Hotel

The Medical Home: Practice Re-Design and Management

Office Staffers Welcome

June 17-20 Annual CME Assembly & Trade Show

Clarion Fontainebleau Resort Hotel, Ocean City

Information and registration materials will soon be available at www.mdafp.org More next month....