

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



2012 Physician Quality Reporting System: Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive Made Simple

FACT SHEET

<http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/PQRS>

Background

The Physician Quality Reporting System (Physician Quality Reporting) is a voluntary reporting program. The program provides an incentive payment to practices with eligible professionals (identified on claims by their individual National Provider Identifier [NPI] and Tax Identification Number [TIN]) who satisfactorily report data on quality measures for covered Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) services furnished to **Medicare Part B Fee-For-Service (FFS) beneficiaries** (including Railroad Retirement Board and Medicare Secondary Payer).

Physicians who are incentive eligible for Physician Quality Reporting can receive an additional 0.5 percent incentive payment when they meet the Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive requirements. This physician-only incentive will be paid at the same time as the 2012 Physician Quality Reporting incentive for those physicians who qualify. Physicians cannot receive more than one additional 0.5 percent Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive even if they complete a Maintenance of Certification Program in more than one specialty.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) suggests that physicians periodically review posted Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive materials at http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/PQRS/Maintenance_of_Certification_Program_Incentive.html on the CMS website to ensure they are informed of all program clarifications and updates.

Purpose

This fact sheet provides steps for successful participation in the Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive. It also explains the role of the qualified Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive entity.

Steps for Successful Participation

STEP 1: Determine if you are eligible to participate in the Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive.

To be eligible for the Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive you must be a board-certified physician.

STEP 2: Meet the requirements for satisfactory reporting under Physician Quality Reporting.

You must meet the requirements for satisfactory reporting under Physician Quality Reporting for a 12-month reporting period as an individual-eligible professional using either individual Physician Quality Reporting measures or measures groups and submitting the Physician Quality Reporting data via claims, a registry, or an Electronic Health Record (EHR), or participate under the Group Practice Reporting Option (GPRO) for a 12-month reporting period.

STEP 3: Identify a Maintenance of Certification Program that has become qualified for purposes of the 2012 Physician Quality Reporting Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive.

For a list of qualified medical specialty boards or entities sponsoring a Maintenance of Certification Program for 2012, visit http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/PQRS/Maintenance_of_Certification_Program_Incentive.html on the CMS website. This list will be available by mid-2012. It is recommended that physicians who wish to participate in the 2012 Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive contact their specialty board or other applicable sponsoring entity for additional details on participation requirements.

STEP 4: Meet the “more frequently” requirements.

After selecting a sponsoring organization for the Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive, you must more frequently than is required to qualify for or maintain board certification status:

- Participate in a Maintenance of Certification Program for a year, and
- Successfully complete at least one Maintenance of Certification Program practice assessment for such year that includes a survey of patient experience with care.

NOTE: Physicians who do not have a Maintenance of Certification Program practice assessment available to them, through their boards or otherwise, are not eligible for the 0.5 percent incentive.

What Does “More Frequently” Mean?

A “Maintenance of Certification Program” must include and require a physician to:

- I. Maintain a valid, unrestricted medical license in the United States;
- II. Participate in educational and self-assessment programs that require an assessment of what was learned;
- III. Demonstrate through a formalized, secure examination that he or she has the fundamental diagnostic skills, medical knowledge, and clinical judgment to provide quality care in his or her respective specialty; and
- IV. Successfully complete a qualified Maintenance of Certification Program practice assessment.

CMS applies the “more frequently” participation requirement to Parts I – III of the Maintenance of Certification Program definition. For Part I, physicians simply need to maintain a valid, unrestricted

license in the United States to meet the requirement for “more frequent” participation. An eligible professional must participate more frequently than is required in at least one of either Part II or Part III. The phrase “more frequently” may be interpreted differently by various CMS qualified Maintenance of Certification Programs.

Part IV must be done for each year the eligible professional participates in the Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive, regardless of whether or how often the physician is required to participate in a Maintenance of Certification Program to maintain board certification.

What Is the Role of a Maintenance of Certification Program Entity?

Maintenance of Certification Program entities will manage the program as well as submit 2012 information by March 31, 2013, on behalf of physicians. A qualified Maintenance of Certification Program entity has demonstrated to CMS what constitutes “more frequently” for the Maintenance of Certification Program itself and for the practice assessment for the specific Maintenance of Certification Program of the sponsoring organization.

Resources

- For more information about the Physician Quality Reporting Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive, refer to “The Physician Quality Reporting System Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive Requirements of Self-Nomination for 2012” and “Fully Qualified Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive Entities for 2012” documents at http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/PQRS/Maintenance_of_Certification_Program_Incentive.html on the CMS website.
- The Medicare Learning Network® (MLN) Educational Web Guides MLN Guided Pathways to Medicare Resources help providers gain knowledge on resources and products related to Medicare and the CMS website. For more information applicable to you, refer to the section about your provider type in the “MLN Guided Pathways to Medicare Resources Provider Specific” booklet at http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNEdWebGuide/Downloads/Guided_Pathways_Provider_Specific_Booklet.pdf on the CMS website. For all other “Guided Pathways” resources, visit http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNEdWebGuide/Guided_Pathways.html on the CMS website.

Questions?

Contact your Qualified Maintenance of Certification Program entity with questions. Physicians will need to work with their selected Maintenance of Certification Program entity to ensure successful completion of the Maintenance of Certification Program Incentive participation requirements. If your entity is unable to answer your questions, contact the **QualityNet Help Desk** at **866-288-8912** (TTY 877-715-6222) Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Central Standard Time, or send an e-mail to qnetsupport@sdps.org for assistance.



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