



Submitting Your Medicare Part A Cost Report Electronically Webcast

Moderated by: Diane Maupai
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Operator: Hello and welcome to today's Medicare Learning Network® event. My name is Jen and I'll be your web event specialist today. All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. Please note that today's event is being recorded.

During the presentation we'll have a question and answer session. You can ask text questions at any time. Click the green Q&A icon on the lower left-hand corner of your screen, type your question in the open area and click submit. We'll also be taking questions via the phone lines and instructions on how to do so will be given at the appropriate time.

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And finally, should you need technical assistance as a best practice we suggest you first refresh your browser. If that does not resolve the issue, please click on the support option in the upper right-hand corner of your screen for online troubleshooting. It is now my pleasure to turn today's program over to Diane Maupai.

Diane, the floor is yours.

Announcements & Introduction

Diane Maupai: Thank you Jen. This is Diane Maupai from the Provider Communications Group at CMS in Baltimore and I'll be your moderator today. Let me start by apologizing that technical issues kept us from starting on time. So, I'd like to welcome you to this Medicare Learning Network webcast on Submitting Your Medicare Part A Cost Report Electronically.

Before we get started there are a few items that I'd like to cover. Today's event uses webcast technology, we recommend streaming the audio live through your computer speakers. Those of you participating via webcast may download a copy of today's slide presentation by clicking on the blue files button at the bottom left side of your screen. Please note that this event is being recorded and transcribed.

Today's event is not intended for the press and the remarks are not considered on the record. If you are a member of the press you may listen in but please refrain from asking questions during the question and answer session. If you have inquiries, contact press@cms.hhs.gov. At this time, I'd like to turn the call over to Ben Moll.

Presentation

Ben Moll: Thank you. My name is Ben Moll, I am the Acting Division Director for the Division of Provider Audit Operations here at CMS in the Office of Financial Management, Financial Services Group. I'd first like to say thank you all for joining us this afternoon and reiterate the apologies for the technical issues.

I'd like to begin by saying the concept of this submitting your Medicare Part A Cost Report electronically began a little over two years ago with a go live that occurred roughly in May of 2018 just a few months ago. It's been a successful deployment, to date we have over 2,500 successful submissions with an average processing time of under four seconds.



Going forward we look to have continued enhancements within the functionality and the accessibility of this system. And with that, I'd like to turn the presentation over to Patrick Herry for the remainder of the presentation.

Patrick Herry: Thanks, so much Ben. So again, like Ben said my name is Patrick Herry, I'll be going through the majority of the slides with everyone. So again, today we'll be covering submitting your Medicare Part A cost report electronically. Please proceed to slide 2.

Slide 2 just covers acronyms that are in this presentation, it's mostly for reference when you access the presentation later. Please proceed to the next slide, slide 3. For an overview of today's meeting we'll introduce the Medicare Cost Report e-Filing System known as MCR eF which will allow you to electronically file your cost report. We'll also communicate additional resources and information available to the community to make that process smoother for the first time that you use the system.

Please proceed to slide 4. For today's meeting agenda we've already covered introductions, we'll have a quick background and overview of the area of CMS that sort of intersects with MCR eF. We'll do a walk through and detailed overview of the MCR eF system. We'll discuss ongoing outreach and education efforts, and we'll conclude the meeting with a question and answer session. Proceed to slide 5.

MCR eF Overview

So, to cover this overview we mostly wanted to give a little context before we dive into the details of MCR eF, and the particular area applicable to MCR eF and CMS is the Medicare cost report. The Medicare cost report is used to determine Part A providers' annual reimbursable cost. Providers use a variety of sources including the PS&R systems, claims reimbursement data to create and fill in their cost report.

Each year approximately 50,000 cost reports are submitted each year which accounts for over \$200 billion dollars' worth of Medicare reimbursement. Providers have a regulation specific deadline for submitting an acceptable cost report, and Medicare Administrative Contractors known as MACs have requirements for receiving, accepting, reviewing, auditing and finalizing those cost reports for that year. Proceed to slide 6.

Next, we'll cover the current cost report submission process and receipt process on the MAC side. Providers today create their cost report package which includes some or all of the following content; an electronic media computer readable version of the cost report which is a custom text file created in cost report vendor software, a human readable version of the cost report which is typically in PDF format.

For a teaching hospital that claim IME and GME interns and residents data known as IRIS and then also any other required supporting materials that are applicable to their cost report submission they also submit those. Lastly, they print the Worksheet S certification page of the cost report that they're filing on and they have an authority, an officer of their provider actually sign that in ink and send that as part of their cost report submission.

Most of these cost report packages are either mailed or hand delivered with a few being transmitted via MAC portals. Once a provider has sent their cost report and the MAC has received it, that MAC has 30 days to perform an acceptability review and make a determination. Please proceed to slide 7.



So, to improve upon that process, CMS established the goals that you see on this slide today which is standardize, automate and streamline this cost for processes for provider submission and MAC receipt acceptance and the subsequent handling of that cost report. Proceed to slide 8.

To achieve this goal, they created the MCR eF system. I'll provide a quick high-level review but we'll get into details here in a few moments. MCR eF again the Medicare Cost Report e-Filing System is a new application allowing Part A providers to electronically transmit their cost report package, so all the materials that we talked about a few slides ago also known as e-filing.

The system has been available as Ben stated earlier since May 1st of 2018. Usage is entirely optional meaning that providers can still mail, or hand deliver their cost report, that's still an option that's available. The system MCR eF overall is accessible to your EIDM PS&R security officials or security official, backup security official, and anyone with the role of MCR eF approved cost report filer.

Once you've submitted your cost report through MCR eF, your MAC will have immediate access to all of the e-file cost report materials that you submitted. Proceed to slide 9. Just to cover a few advantages of MCR eF, there are more but these are sort of the high-level ones that we wanted to cover. You'll see in a moment that the webpage is extremely easy to use, it's just a single webpage. And you just click a few buttons, upload a few files, and click submit and your process for submitting your cost report is done.

MCR eF provides one process, one consistent process for all providers via one submission portal. So, it's available to all Part A providers regardless of MAC and the experience will be the same regardless of your servicing MAC. Particularly beneficial to chain organizations which have providers at multiple MACs or anytime you change MACs that you're having – that you're being serviced by.

Having this one consistent process through one webpage reduces confusion, delays and time you spend on administrative processes relating to your cost report submission. And like I said earlier, once you click submit you'll get immediate feedback on the receivability of your cost report submission whether it was received or if there are any issues that need to be worked out before you can successfully send that cost report. Proceed to slide 10.

New MCR Submission Process

So now we want to talk about the new cost report submission process with MCR eF in mind. We'll go through several slides that are sort of more of a detailed overview of the system where we'll get into each field. We'll cover how to log in, how to use the system, and finally actually hit submit to submit your cost report. Proceed to slide 11.

To access the system over the internet you'll type <https://mcref.cms.gov> into your internet URL into your browser. Again, the system is controlled by EIDM for access and is particularly restricted to EIDM PS&R security officials, backup security officials, and those that have been approved for the MCR eF approved cost report filer role. That's a new role as of May that has been available since MCR eF was live in May.

Existing PS&R security officials and backup security officials will already have access to the system for free, won't have to do anything else or by default they'll have access. Any organization without access to PS&R must



register a PS&R security official within EIDM. So, you have to have the security official to actually then grant those other roles like the MCRéF specific role.

If you want to use MCRéF you'll have to keep your EIDM accounts in good standing so a few notes about that. That includes password updates so make sure to change your password in a timely manner, and also replacing that security official if the person with that role has moved on to a new role or from your company.

Lastly if you do have issues with your EIDM credentials, that's not a valid reason to file your cost report late. You could always package up your cost report on a CD, bundle that together and mail that in or hand deliver it to your MAC as you do today. So EIDM issues or log in issues won't be an excuse for being late with your cost report submission if you want to use MCRéF.

And lastly, we want to talk about a particular EIDM enhancement that happened in early September. Prior to September 10th, consultants that worked with multiple provider organizations were unable to have more than one open role request across their organizations, meaning that they could make a role request for one of their providers but then couldn't make another role request or request for a role at any other provider organizations until that first role had a determination made whether it was approved or denied.

So, CMS worked with the EIDM team to actually establish an enhancement and that went out on September 10th, and that now allows for multiple open role requests across provider organizations for consultants or anyone that needs that sort of access. Proceed to slide 12.

The next several slide will cover actually logging in to the MCRéF system, what the system looks like, the various fields. We'll get into details about what those fields actually are populated with and selecting those fields.

So, this first screen when you first type in mcref.cms.gov will be the screen that you see. It's the Enterprise Portal terms and conditions page or the system use notification page. Once you've read through that and agree you click I accept. Please proceed to slide 13.

Once you've accepted that you'll move on to the Enterprise Portal user ID page. Here's where you're going to need to type in your PS&R security official, back up security official or your MCRéF approved cost report filer ID and then you'll click next once you put in that user ID. Proceed to slide 14.

Then you'll be taken to the Enterprise Portal password page, so you want to put in your valid password associated to that ID that you used on the previous screen and click log in.

Proceed to slide 15. And then if all that goes well you'll be in the MCRéF system and this is what it looks like. As I said on several slides ago it's a simple single page, you'll fill out a few of these fields and then click submit. So, the first I'll cover are the provider and fiscal year end fields. You'll select your CMS certification number, you're provided a CCN from that provider drop down.

Once you select that, the fiscal year end will be populated with all fiscal year ends that can have any filed submission for that year. You'll select that and then you'll – please go to slide 16. From there we'll cover Medicare utilization and first cost report submission. You'll select from the Medicare utilization drop down. The options



available there will be full, low or no and then you'll confirm the first cost report submission value that's displayed there.

In this case it's yes meaning that based on the system's understanding of records that are in place this is your first cost report submission for the year. If it was no that means the system has indicated that there is a submission that has already occurred for the year and any other submissions would be considered revised submissions. Proceed to slide 17.

Next, we'll cover all of the cost report material section. This is where you actually upload the files that are required of you as part of your cost report submission which you would typically include on your CD. Those are all the files that would end up going into the applicable slot here in the cost report material section. The first thing to note is you do not need to encrypt, or password protect any of the uploaded files to any of these slots, that includes ZIP files or any archived file types. The website is a secure portal of transmission of cost report materials including PHI and PII.

So quick run through of if you wanted to upload your ECR, there are slots available for ECR print image signed certification page, IRIS, other, and cover letter. And so, if you wanted to upload your ECR file you would simply click browse, navigate to the place on your hard drive where that file is located, select it. It would display in the file upload text box corresponding to the row that you just uploaded the file for and then that would be sort of you satisfying uploading the file.

At that point once you've uploaded all of your files for each row that are required of you, there is an I acknowledge check box at the bottom. You'll need to select that, that will enable the submit button. And then once you click submit, basically the transaction cannot be stopped. At that point the system will determine whether your cost report submission is receivable or not.

And so there are some errors that can occur or edits that can occur where if there are issues with what you submitted, the system will present back to you those issues. The cost report will not have been received at that point, your MAC will not be aware of that submission and then you'll have to address that thing before you can actually make a successful submission. So, I'll show an example of that here on slide 18 if we can move to slide 18.

So, in this case the error message section of the screen has popped up, you'll see we gave an error code. So, this is error R1005 and in particular this one states that the provider FYB or FYU specified on the cost report does not match what was selected on the screen. We give a little bit of additional information and in particular we're saying the cost report which are the values in the ECR file don't match what was selected in the screen.

And so, you can see in this example for whatever reason the cost report in the ECR has 12/26/2017 as the fiscal year end but as you see on the screen the fiscal year end selected is 12/31/2017. So, the system noticed that discrepancy and that would have to be resolved before you can successfully submit that cost report submission.

So, let's say you've resolved that issue you regenerated your ECR file with the proper fiscal year end, you've clicked the I acknowledge check box again and the submit button's enabled and you click submit, now we'll cover a successful scenario where the cost report is received. And so, this will be the screen that you're presented with



once you've successfully submitted your cost report and at this point you're done, you've successfully submitted your cost report.

You can print this screen for your records. We also have printer friendly version functionality up in the right-hand corner of the content section if you want to see a printer friendly version that you can actually print. A couple of things to note on the screen, there is that success message saying that your cost report has been electronically postmarked with CMS and the retaining information as I mentioned the information that's below.

A couple more things to point out are the e-filing ID and the e-postmark date. The e-filing ID is your unique transaction ID. You can use that to communicate with CMS or your MAC about your cost report submission. Your electronic postmark date is when you fulfilled your requirement of, or when you actually submitted that cost report in Eastern Time. So, you can see here this was done on September 20th at 11:41 am Eastern Time.

All the other selections on the screen or the other values you see here on the screen are selections you made on the prior screen or the typical – the actual file names that you uploaded for a particular cost report slot. The last thing that I'll point out is the bottom of the screen are the log out button. If this is all you want to do is submit this particular year's cost report you're done, you log out and you'll be logged out of the system.

If you wish you can file another cost report. Let's say you have more providers that you want to file cost reports for, you simply click the file another cost report and you'll be taken back to the screen we just saw – we were just looking at a moment ago. Now please proceed to slide 20.

Now I'll actually get into the details of each of the fields on screen. So first is the provider number that contains all CMS certification numbers that have been registered in EIDM which the provider's MAC also has on record in CMS's system for tracking audit reimbursement. And that's STAR it's called STAR and that's a MAC maintained system.

Next is the fiscal year end drop down, this will contain all fiscal year ends for the provider that you selected that have occurred in the last six years that are on or after 12/31/2017 that are also available that the MAC is aware of in STAR. Medicare utilization, this allows the provider to select their Medicare utilization level for the cost report that they're e-filing for. As I stated on previous slides, the options available are full, low and no.

First cost report submission field is what indicates whether or not the cost report has already been recorded in STAR as received by the provider's MAC for that selected provider in fiscal year end. So, this will tell you whether your MAC is aware of a submission already or not. Lastly are the cost report material table which we just went through which is where you'll upload all materials needed to submit your completed cost report package.

This includes an ECR, a print image, a signed certification page, IRIS, cover letter, and any other additional files in the other slot. The one note at the bottom here is that if you're unable to locate a particular provider number or CCN or a particular fiscal year end that you're expecting in those drop downs, the first thing that we would instruct you to do is to confirm with your security official of your organization that that CCN has been properly registered within EIDM, and that you have a value - that you have a valid role or MCR eF role registered for your organization and you've been granted those privileges for e-filing.



So that's where you're either an SO, BSO or an MCR eF approved cost report filer. If you've done all of that and you're still having issues and don't see a value, then you should contact your MAC. Proceed to slide 21.

Next, we'll go through that cost report materials table section where we'll cover each of the slots where you can upload files for. The first is the ECR. This is the electronic cost report file that's generated in CR vendor software.

As a trigger for memory this is also known as the 'EC', 'SN', 'HH' file depending on what type of provider you are. That isn't a complete list of all of the different I guess short terms for the different types of ECRs, but in general just trying to trigger memories of what this file is expecting. The ECR is required for all providers filing a full Medicare utilization cost report except for home offices and Limited Purpose Insurance Companies.

The format expected for this is a single file generated using a current version of CMS certified ECR vendor software that is not a PDF, ZIP file or other archived file type and the file limit for ECR is one megabyte. Print image is a human readable copy of the cost report. For home offices this is considered the 287-05-cost statement. The print image is required for all providers filing a full or low Medicare utilization cost report except for LPICs those Limited Purpose Insurance Companies.

The format expected is any human readable format generated using a current version of CMS certified vendor software that is not a ZIP file or archive file type. The file limit here is 10 MB. Next is the sign certification page, this is the electronically signed Worksheet S certification page and for home offices that's the 287-05 Schedule A. This is required for all providers except LPICs.

The format expected is any human readable format including the encryption codes generated using a current version of CMS certified cost report vendor software that is not a ZIP file or archive file type, and the limit the size limit for this particular slot is 10 MB. Proceed to slide 22.

Next is IRIS, this is the interns and residents' information systems files required for teaching hospitals claiming GME, IME – claiming GME, IME Full Time Equivalent on their cost report. This is not currently required but CMS may decide to do so in the future. The format expected here is an unencrypted ZIP file containing a single set of M and A Assignment or DBF files. The M refers to Master file, the A refers to Assignment file and the file size limit is one MB for this particular slot.

Next is other, this is where you would upload any other files needed for submission to constitute complete filing which do not otherwise have dedicated slots. These are files such as your working trial balance, your bad debt listing but essentially everything else that didn't already have a slot where you uploaded files for. This is required for all LPIC provider cost reports.

The format expected here is this slot actually supports all file types including the support for you uploading multiple files within a single unencrypted ZIP file or other archive file type. The file size limit here is 300 MB including the total attached file size.

Lastly is the cover letter, this is the document describing the nature of your submission or any other information about your submission which you wish to communicate to your MAC upfront. This is required for all revised cost reports. The format expected here is any human readable format that is not a ZIP file or other archive file type and the file size limit here is 10 MB.



Please go to slide 23. All right some additional information about the actual e-file submission of itself, as we stated earlier the system will perform certain receivability validations to confirm if your cost report is fundamentally sound. We'll cover each of those errors on the next slide. If any error is displayed on screen to you, then that means the cost report was not received and your MAC will not be aware of that submission. These are not considered rejections and don't follow CMS's formal cost report rejection processes.

If the submission passes all of those receivability validations and we'll cover those in a moment, you'll be directed to the confirmation screen we saw few slides back and that screen will display the following information; the success message that we saw, also you e-postmark date in Eastern Time, your unique e-filing ID which you can use to communicate with your MAC about your submission, and all the selections that you made for the submission on the prior screen when you clicked submit.

Lastly when we saw the confirmation screen you should save a copy of that screen's contents for your records. Once you log out of the system you won't be able to access that screen again and so that's your opportunity to sort of grab a screenshot of that as proof of your successful submission. Proceed to slide 24.

Okay so as I was saying on the previous slide, there are certain receivability checks or validations that the system does to make sure the submission is good. The first is that all required cost report materials are included that are required in valid format and within the size limit specified. That's all the information we went through on slide 21 and 22 for each of the slots.

The attached files must conform to other technical restrictions such as they can't contain a virus or a malware, they must have valid file names and cannot be blank or empty. You can only submit up to one revision per day for a fiscal year end. That revision can be submitted prior to acceptance or can be submitted or can be used to submit an amended cost report submission after as filed acceptance.

And then one thing to note, if you already submit a revision on a particular day and you want to submit an additional submission all you would need to do is send a request via email or mail to your MAC to reject that original one if that was erroneous such that you could do another revision on that same day.

Next is that the fiscal year end must be within the past six years and must be on or after 12/31/2017. This is already covered by the values that are present in the drop down. The provider fiscal year began in fiscal year end must exist in the CMS STAR system which is maintained by the MACs and must match the ECR file if that is provided. Next is the provider fiscal year unspecified cannot be locked. An example of being locked is administratively closed.

You cannot be a subunit because you should be filing your cost report under your main parent cost report, and you cannot already have a finalized NPR present in the STAR system. Lastly, all subunits and consolidated FQHC/RHC units in the ECR file must match those listed in STAR for your family when filing a Full Medicare Utilization Cost Report. Proceed to slide 25.

So just a few additional details, when you actually fill out the various forms and upload your files and when you click submit there are cases where you can get a warning. In particular if you're filing your cost report late you'll get a warning telling you that you're filing late and to see if that's intentional. If you try to upload a cost report



generated using outdated cost report vendor software, you will receive a warning because for the most part you should be submitting on the latest software provided by your cost report vendor.

Timely receipt of your cost report will be based on 11:59 pm Eastern Time for your provider's cost report due date. So, if you file on your cost report due date by 11:59 pm Eastern Time then you'll be on time, if you file at 12 or 12:01 you'll be considered late. As I stated when we looked at the screenshot's files uploaded are not to be encrypted or password protected. MCR eF is a secure portal for transmission of cost report materials and that includes PHI and PII.

Duplicate submissions will be rejected by your MAC, only the first cost report that your MAC receives will be processed. So just so you know that the second one or subsequent ones will be rejected if they're deemed to be duplicates. The first cost report received by your MAC either via MCR eF or mail hand delivery will be treated as your first cost report submission for the year.

So as an example to sort of cement this is, if you're a provider and file a - if you mail a cost report prior to your due date in which that would be timely and then you decide to file a cost report also via MCR eF but now it's after your due date but prior to when that first cost report that was submitted via mail has actually been received by your MAC, when you're in MCR eF to file that submission the system will warn you that you're filing a cost report past your due date, and just sort of work out whether that mailed in submission was the one you actually intended to or if you really want to file your cost report late based on the one that you're trying to submit.

Proceed to slide 26. So, until 1/1/2019 early next year, all current methods of cost report submission are available. MCR eF is just an additional option that's been available since May 1st. Effective January 2nd, 2019 only two CMS approved methods of cost report submission will remain; that's the electronic submission via MCR eF the Medicare Cost Report e-Filing System and physical submission of your cost report via mail or hand delivery.

We talked about some of the receivability or checks earlier. There may be some cases where there's exceptions where you need to actually mail, or hand deliver your cost report, and those are cases where your cost report would satisfy CMS's acceptability criteria but would not pass MCR eF's receivability checks. Those must be sent in via mail or hand delivery.

And as an example, for the other slot where you can submit multiple files via a ZIP, if you actually have to submit over 300 MB of documentation that would be a case where you would need to right now mail that in to your MAC and the system —the system wouldn't allow you to because right now we have a 300 MB limit for other. One other thing is if MCR eF is down or you have any technical reasons for why you can't use MCR eF and file your cost report on time, that will – that will not grant you an extension because system issues will not be sort of a reason for why you – for filing late.

In that case you should take your cost report, package it together as you have in the past and mail that in to your MAC to make sure it's timely. Proceed to slide 27.

Okay, and to align 100 percent electronic transmission of the cost report, CMS issued the 2018 IPPS final rule in August of 2017 which authorizes providers to file their cost report with an electronic signature effective for fiscal year end on or after 12/31/2017.



As a note here, the IPPS final rule did not change who is authorized to sign so nothing about the IPPS rule has changed that. Next as stated before, CMS has been working on updating transmittals for some of the various cost report versions to support e-signature. If you file for a cost report version that does not currently support e-signature, you'll have to go through an additional step.

You'll have to upload when using MCR eF and submitting via MCR eF you'll upload a scanned copy of your Worksheet S certification page via the sign certification page slot as we saw earlier. And you'll need to mail, or hand deliver a hard copy of that same Worksheet S certification page with a signature in ink to your MAC and it must be received within 10 days of the cost – the MCR eF submission. So that's an exception if you're filing on a cost report version that doesn't support e-signature.

And on slide 28 these are the current versions that allow for e-signature. The only ones that remain are the 287-05-home office cost statement, the 222-92 and 2088-92 for RHCs and CMHCs. But those actually have replacement versions and are applicable based on what's in the current e-signature capable column. Proceed to slide 29.

Okay in the next couple of slides we wanted to take the opportunity to give you a few examples of valid and invalid uses of e-signature. This isn't an exhaustive list because there are other ways that you could have a valid e-signature or an invalid e-signature, but we wanted to cover these to sort of give examples of what would be allowed and what wouldn't be allowed. Proceed to slide 30.

All right so this is a valid use of e-signature, here is the Worksheet S page. There's a check box at the bottom basically essentially saying that this electronic signature serves as your legal binding equivalent of an original signature. That must be checked on the Worksheet S certification page to use e-signature for your cost report. And then you'll notice also highlighted is the actual name.

In this case the name has been typed, the first and last name has been typed into some sort of software or on the actual form and scanned. This is a valid use of e-signature; the check box is checked, and it's signed. Proceed to slide 31.

Another valid use of e-signature again the check box stating that the e-signature serves as their original signature is checked that must be done, and then they've actually printed, and the official of the provider has hand signed their signature on the signature line, and then they've scanned that and then put that into the certification slot in MCR eF. That is another valid use of e-signature.

Proceed to slide 32.

The next two are invalid uses of e-signature so this is an invalid use of electronic signature. In this case the particular example they haven't checked the e-signature serves as their original signature check box. And so, at this point this is not a valid use of e-signature and would most likely be rejected. Proceed to the next slide, 33.

This is another invalid use of e-signature, they've checked the check box, but their signature doesn't contain a valid first and last name they've just entered X123 into the signature line. Please go to slide 34, next we'll talk a little bit about MCR eF provider user experience.



MCReF Provider User Experience

Proceed to slide 35. First being before the MCReF went live on May 1st, we had six provider organizations that volunteered to test the MCReF system itself. This represented over 150 Part A providers.

As part of the testing and giving us their results, the participants were asked on a scale of 1 to 10 how likely they were to use MCReF once it was live. The average rating, we received was a 9.7 out of 10. And then some quotes we received as feedback; it's very easy to use and to understand, the system was quick to show errors and intended results, and MCReF is an excellent experience and I'm excited and anxious for it to go live. Proceed to slide 36.

To echo some of the statements Ben had earlier, the system has been live since 5/1 and just to give a few stats there's been over 2,500 successful submission from over 600 distinct users. Once these users have selected their provider fiscal year end Medicare utilization level and uploaded all their files, from clicking submit, the actual submit button. it only took a little bit over three seconds for their cost report to be successfully received.

And then lastly, over 300 providers were able to correct errors with cost report prior to submission and without the need of correspondence with their MAC and potentially avoiding the rejection of their cost report because they resolved those issues in MCReF. Proceed to slide 37.

Ongoing Outreach and Education

Lastly, we're going to go over ongoing outreach and education efforts. Go to slide 38.

So, there's already been a change request 10611 that was issued back in April. This has a lot of information about MCReF and some of the – a quick guide of some of the information I went over for how to submit and how to log in. Next is the MLN Matters article, there's a link here where you can use that to access that article. We've had two webinars now with one being today and one being May 1st when the system went live.

There's also an official CMS website posting for the MCReF System and that includes links to how to request the user roles in EIDM for MCReF. It has the actual MCReF user manual itself, the MLN articles, and frequently asked questions. And lastly CMS is in the process of several documentation updates which include 100-06, the Provider Reimbursement Manual 15.1 and 15.2, and then the various cost report Transmittal Reports that we mentioned earlier for those versions that don't currently allow for electronic signature.

Proceed to slide 39. And now we'll exit the presentation and we can begin the question and answer session of today's event.

Question & Answer Session

Diane Maupai: Thank you Patrick. Our experts will now take your questions. Throughout the Q&A session we will ask you questions about MCReF via the webcast. Remember to disable your popup blockers for best results. We'll begin our session by answering a few questions that we received from webcast participants and then we'll take questions from the phone.



Operator, please prompt the telephone users and begin to compile the Q&A roster.

Operator: To ask a question press star followed by the number 1 on your touchtone phone. To remove yourself from the queue, press the pound key. Remember to pick up your handset before asking your question to assure clarity. Once your line is open state your name and organization.

Please note your line will remain open during the time you're asking your question so anything you say, or any background noise will be heard in the conference. If you have more than one question, press star 1 to get back into the queue and we will address additional questions as time permits. Please hold while we compile the Q&A roster.

Diane Maupai: Okay. While you compile the roster, we'll start taking some questions from the webcast. Slide 21, where can we obtain a list of CMS certified ECR vendor software providers? I have searched but I'm unable to find a list.

Geoff Kuhn: This is Geoff Kuhn with CG Federal team that maintains the system. To my understanding there is not a single published list of the certified ECR vendors. The CMS division of cost reporting issues documentation for each cost report version as to which vendors are approved for that version. I know that's published sort of separately on the CMS website. But there's no just one page that has a table with vendors and cost report versions.

Diane Maupai: Thank you Geoff. Let's see, the MCR eF site just keeps bringing me back to log in page after successfully logging in with the correct password and MFA code. This is happening to me and one of my team members who was trying to access the MCR eF site. What is causing this issue and how can this be resolved?

Geoff Kuhn: In general, that's a very specific troubleshooting question. I would say that your best bet is to reach out to the end user services help desk. And Patrick have we already put that slide up or is that coming after?

Patrick Herrity: Yes, I think it's actually the next slide.

Geoff Kuhn: Yes, so there's more slides – there's a slide in here with that information on it which is contact information for end user services. They are the best people to talk to about any sort of account issues that you're experiencing accessing MCR eF or PS&R. For your particular case it sounds like you might not have an MCR eF authorized role yet but that's definitely something EUS can help you with.

Diane Maupai: Okay. A clarification should be made that the human readable version of the cost report does not need to be a PDF. Plain text is also an acceptable format. This is causing confusion for providers using software that produces a plain text file as the human readable version.

Geoff Kuhn: The person writing that in is correct. When we are referring to human readable we're just trying to differentiate from the electronic cost report file which is very far from human readable. It's the one we talked about several times where the MCR Medicare cost report slot on the screen.

For it to be human readable we're really looking for something that you could open on your computer and see the content of. So, a formatted text file, a PDF, in the case of like a human readable cover letter a Word doc is



fine because a Word doc is something a person can open up and read. So just in general we're not saying that the only type of human readable thing is a PDF, a PDF is just an example of.

When it comes to your print image, your cost report vendor software generally produces a print image file. Whatever that file is, is the file that we're looking for.

Diane Maupai: Thank you Geoff. One more — let's see. Will providers that do not file claims such as histocompatibility labs and organ procurement organizations be able to utilize this option? Hold on one minute. Okay thank you.

Geoff Kuhn: We believe that the histocompatibility labs and organ procurement agencies should be able to file on the official CMS form 216-94 which if we go the— we have the slide listing out the valid forms and the e-signature that should be listed and it should be e-signature capable at this point. So those should be able to use MCR eF for their filings.

Diane Maupai: Jen do we have questions from the phone?

Operator: There are no questions at this time.

Diane Maupai: Okay. MCR eF approved cost reports filer how do we get approval for this role?

Geoff Kuhn: The MCR eF approved cost report filer is a role to request within EIDM the same way you would request PS&R user access or to become a backup security official. So, if you go into EIDM and you already have PS&R user access, you're saying I want to add a user role to my PS&R account.

If you don't have any sort of PS&R access then you want to find the PS&R application within EIDM and say request a role within this application, and then the process is the same as if you are requesting PS&R access. There's also on the CMS info page which I believe there are we have links to, there's a quick guide for requesting general roles for MCR eF and so this works the same as all the others.

Diane Maupai: And that would be slide — slide 38 has a link to that webpage that has the wealth of material on it. Is EIDM request for multiple providers at the same time available for security official and backup security access also?

Geoff Kuhn: We discussed earlier the change that the EIDM made recently which allows multiple outstanding requests to be made before each of those approved. That was not just made for MCR eF or PS&R. That is for all the roles within our applications so whether it's SO or BSO, PS&R user or MCR eF authorized whether it's within one org or across you should be able to create multiple requests while you're waiting for your prior approvals. So yes, applicable to all those roles.

Diane Maupai: Okay, thank you. What if we are filing a stub period cost report, will the fiscal year — will the fiscal year end automatically recognize if the cost report is a stub period and have the appropriate state?



Geoff Kuhn: In MCR eF when you go to your drop down to select the year you want to file for, if your MAC is already aware that you're filing a stub period and they've had an opportunity to update their system, then MCR eF will reflect the short period in the drop down.

If you know that you're filing a short period and you do not see that option in the drop down, you should be reaching out to your MAC to notify them that you have a short period and coordinate with them to get that updated at which point MCR eF will then make it available to you. So, when you're filing a short period you'll want to see the short period in the drop down, it will be there as long as the MAC knows.

Diane Maupai: Thank you Geoff. Can you please advise who is required to file cost reports? We are an outpatient rehab facility, we file Part A but we are paid out of Part B and can you define what defines low or no utilization? Give us one moment.

Geoff Kuhn: I think for the specific question as to whether or not you're required to file a cost report, you may want to send that in as an email to the address listed on the slide. That may be very specific to your scenario. For the definition of low or no utilization, that's something that is up to the individual MACs when they're working with their individual workloads.

So if you'd have questions about whether or not you would qualify as a low or no utilization cost report you should speak to your MAC about that.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. Is the home office form 287-05 separately listed as a provider in the provider list? Does it require separate registration in MCR eF?

Geoff Kuhn: For those of you that are working with home office or filing as a home office, you're going to need to register the CCN equivalent of the home office in your EIDM account. So, have your security official list that number in the organization profile even if they have not traditionally done it because home office never interacted with PS&R.

Once that's done then the home office would be available as an option for e-filing within MCR eF. If you are a home office who's not registered via NSO with an existing provider, then the security official equivalent at the home office would need to register their organization within EIDM following the normal process for setting up a new provider.

Diane Maupai: Okay thank you. Can cost report re-openings be submitted through MCR eF as well?

Geoff Kuhn: As of today, there's no functionality for submitting cost report re-openings through MCR eF. Once your cost report has been finalized you'll get an error from MCR eF saying that no further submissions can be submitted and that you should reach out to your MAC.

Diane Maupai: Thank you Geoff. What happens if a Medicare bad debt file was password protected and forgot to take – and they forgot to take off the password before uploading into MCR eF, what do we need to do? Give us one minute.



Geoff Kuhn: In this specific case the easiest thing to do would be to contact your MAC to tell them that you made a small mistake with your submission. The MAC will sort of ignore the first submission, they'll will remove it as a submission and that will allow you to just submit a replacement with the unencrypted bad debt file.

Diane Maupai: Okay, thank you. Now we're going to take a question from the phone line.

Operator: Your question – your question comes from the line of Dilly Mishots.

Lee Miu: Hi, my name is Lee Miu I'm actually with a company that is an approved vendor. There was a question that was asking for a listing of approved vendors, there's only a handful of us that are approved but many of the MACs have individual on their websites I know Novitas has a list of all the vendors and which cost reports they're approved for.

Geoff Kuhn: Great, thank you for that additional info.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. And now I'm going to go back to the webcast now. If CMS is having systems issues, why will that not be a reason for an extension? Give us a moment please. Okay thank you. Could you please send that in to the email address on slide 40? Thank you. Slide 26 physical submission via mail or hand delivery, does via mail still include WebEx?

Geoff Kuhn: Sorry still include FedEx, right?

Diane Maupai: FedEx, right.

Geoff Kuhn: Yes, mail includes postal service, FedEx. Whatever form of courier service that you've used in the past is still a valid form of mail and delivery of your cost report.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. Does the timestamp need to be present for the e-signature to be valid?

Geoff Kuhn: I guess I'm not sure what timestamp they're referring to. If they want – the person who submitted this has more specific details, you probably want to submit this to the email address on the screen and we can clarify better for you.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. If a change is made in STAR by the MAC, how long until that change is reflected in MCR eF as an example a change in fiscal year end?

Geoff Kuhn: Once the MAC has completed their change the user sort of logs out and logs back in to MCR eF, the change should be available pretty much instantaneously.

Diane Maupai: Okay, thank you. In the other line can you upload separate files, or do they all have to be zipped into one file?

Geoff Kuhn: To sort of reiterate this one, the other slot is a single file slot, but it can accept multiple other files as long as they are in a ZIP file or some other form of archive. So, you can have 20 files but they need to be in some form of archive or zipped together before they can be attached to that other slot.



Diane Maupai: Thank you. If a third-party cost report preparer uploads the cost report on behalf of the provider, what do you suggest as the best practice for the provider to sign the cost report? Give us one minute please.

Geoff Kuhn: For this there is no CMS guidance as to the one preferred way to do the cost report signature. I think the goal has been to be somewhat flexible there so that you can do whatever works for your organization.

Diane Maupai: Okay, thank you. How can it be verified that the approved — I guess signature is actually the person who electronically filed — signed the cost report? I guess we're going to skip that question. Can you review how to submit I guess home office cost reports?

Geoff Kuhn: Certainly. So, home office cost reports are cost statements, they work the same way as pretty much everything else in MCR eF they just require fewer files. So, when doing a home office cost statement there is no electronic file equivalent. There will just be a print image or equivalent sort of thing for a home office and some other documentation that the system requires.

If you log in once you've registered the home office ID as issued by your MAC within EIDM after logging in, the home office ID will be in the drop down. You select that ID with the corresponding home office's fiscal year and then attach the files the system directs you to attach via the required field indicators and then submit like anybody else.

Diane Maupai: A manually signed certification page must be uploaded and mailed in or hand delivered within 10 days after uploaded into MCR eF correct?

Geoff Kuhn: For the cost reports which are still in the boat where they need the hybrid method that's true. I think we went over the table and that's only the CMHC on the 2088-92 and the RHC on the 222-92. For the new versions of those that are effective for the 9/30/2018 year, those are e-signature capable and therefore no longer apply to the work around.

In general, for everyone else there they are already e-signature capable and don't apply to that workaround.

Patrick Herrity: That pretty much leaves you with home offices that aren't e-signature capable.

Diane Maupai: Will the home office cost report be allowed to be e-filed in the future and if so when? Give us one moment.

Geoff Kuhn: I don't think we can provide any guidance along the lines of when the 287-05 will have an electronic format allowed. But I do want to sort of emphasize that a home office cost statement can be e-filed through the MCR eF system, it's just not an electronic format when you're doing so. It's sort of the print image of it without corresponding electronic cost report file.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. If we choose to not check the box on the signature page, hand sign it, scan and upload the page do we still need to send in a hard copy of the original signed signature page via mail?



Geoff Kuhn: If you are e-filing your cost report on a version of the cost report which support e-signature, then the only valid way to e-file is to e-sign which means you need to check the box. Only for the two versions that have the workaround would it – which don't even have the box to check would it make sense to be doing that.

So in this particular case if you are submitting it without checking that and you're trying to send the copy that's going through the mail, I believe your cost report is going to get rejected for not having a valid signature. So, one way or the other check the box if you're going to be using MCR eF going forward.

Diane Maupai: Thank you Geoff. Do you need to request the PS&R user role and the MCR eF approved cost report filer for a new provider? Or if you request the MCR eF approved cost report filer does that automatically give you the PS&R user role also?

Geoff Kuhn: In order to request PS&R reports you need to have to PS&R user role, in order to file things at MCR eF you need to have the MCR eF role. So, if you want to do both of those things you need to have both of the roles assigned unless you are a security official or a backup security official.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. To confirm, I can request several PS&R security official roles in EIDM at one time for multiple organizations and not be limited to waiting one to be processed and approved before submitting another request?

Geoff Kuhn: That is our understanding. One thing I would emphasize is that there's no screen in EIDM for submitting five requests in a single button click. It's you must always make one request submit it. But then the system change is such that you can then immediately go and start another request without waiting on the first one's approval or denial status.

Diane Maupai: Okay thank you. Can you mail the home office cost report and send the others using MCR eF?

Geoff Kuhn: As of right now mailing things in remains an entirely valid way to submit any form of cost report home office or otherwise. So, in this scenario if you want to send the home office through the mail and send in your provider cost reports through MCR eF that is legitimate.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. You referenced valid file names, do these apply only to ECR and print image files or is there a name format for attachments?

Geoff Kuhn: For MCR eF valid file names generally means that it's a file name that will be understood by the operating system and not have any sort of weird characters or issues that will cause to get kicked out. There are no direct file naming standards that must be followed for you know cover letter must have this name on it.

I think whatever names you apply to the files are mostly useful to the MACs with the exception of the IRIS files which if they're not named properly the MAC will have to rename before they can process them. But either way valid file names really just mean its valid file name from an operating system perspective and doesn't have any weird systematically problematic characters in it.

Diane Maupai: Okay, thank you. Can accountants and consultants have one single log in for all cost report clients?



Geoff Kuhn: The way that the EIDM system functions is that any individual can only have one account and then that account can be associated to however many organizations that account is approved for. So, whoever your individuals working in the consulting office are, they need to have their own account, but then that account can be set up for access to all of your clients as long as all the clients approve that account for access.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. Can cost reports still be submitted via MAC portal?

Geoff Kuhn: So long as your MAC portal is still operational, it is valid for submissions up until 1/1/2019. As of 1/2/2019 MAC portals are not allowed. Each MAC is following their own schedule in terms of turning off the portals though. So, if your MAC no longer has their portal no longer available then it's no longer available.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. Is MCR eF still not compatible with Firefox?

Geoff Kuhn: There is still an outstanding issue with the compatibility between MCR eF and Firefox and therefore it remains that you'll get a message log in with Firefox telling you that you want to be using a different browser.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. Other documentation shows only one row in MCR eF, however I assume multiple separate files can be uploaded.

Geoff Kuhn: Without knowing what other documentation's being referred to, so the CR file section on MCR eF has six or seven slots. Each of those slots accepts a single file. But in the case of things like IRIS or other that single file can be an archive containing many other files. But there's no functionality within MCR eF for saying go into a slot and attaching five or six files off of your drive all at once. Each slot one file, those files can be archived with multiple underneath them.

Diane Maupai: Will this slide presentation be available for download after the webcast?

Yes, as I mentioned there'll be a file at the lower left-hand corner and it's also posted on our MLN calls page. There'll be the presentation, the transcript and the audio recording.

If we submit the cost report electronically and the cost report produces an amount due back to the MAC, what will be the procedure for submitting payment?

Geoff Kuhn: Currently the procedure for submitting payment to the MAC is different depending on the MAC that you work with, and that information is almost always included in communications from the MAC to the provider. So whatever procedure your MAC tells you to use for submitting payments, whatever address they ask you to send it to etcetera that's what you should be following.

Diane Maupai: Okay, we have one more question remaining so I'm just giving you all a heads up if you want to call in or you would like to submit another one through the webcast.

If a cost report can be signed electronically but is signed manually will it be rejected? Give us one moment please.



Geoff Kuhn: If submitted through MCR eF a cost report that could have been signed electronically but was not will be rejected. If a cost report can be signed electronically but you're sending it through the mail, then it doesn't need to be signed electronically for submitting through the mail. But if you're doing MCR eF and it's a version which supports e-signature, you must electronically sign it for it to be an acceptable cost report.

Diane Maupai: If we submit a valid typed e-signature page, do we still need to mail in an actual signed Worksheet S signature page?

Geoff Kuhn: If a cost report has been successfully and correctly e-signed per the examples we show in the slides, there is no requirement to send in an additional copy of the physically signed document through the mail.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. Can you further clarify we are consultants that prepare and file cost reports on behalf of our clients. That being said, we do create an account on the CMS site and request access for PS&R and then do each of our clients have to add us on their end as an approved cost report filer or do we request this via our CMS account and they have to grant access?

Geoff Kuhn: You as consultants as individuals will create accounts and then for those accounts you are going to go request access to each of the providers that you want to do the work on behalf of. The security officials at each of those providers will then receive in their sort of inbox queue this person has requested access to my organization of this level whether it's MCR eF or PS&R and then they will have to individually approve or reject those requests.

So, if you're working with five hospitals you create one account, you would put in five requests. You'd look up their organizations in the EIDM and say I'm looking for MCR eF access to this hospital and that will route the request, the SO will do the approval.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. All right to confirm, if I check the box on the signature page and then do a physical signature I can upload that file and not have to send in a hard copy via mail since I've checked the box. Is that correct?

Geoff Kuhn: In this case if you're checking the box, you're applying a physical signature on a paper document, you're then scanning that document and taking the scanned document uploading to MCR eF, that is perfectly fine and there's no requirement to send in the hard copy as well.

Diane Maupai: Can an MCR eF approved cost report filer order PS&R reports?

Geoff Kuhn: A person with only the MCR eF cost approved—approved cost report filer role does not have PS&R access. That person can get approved for PS&R access with a separate role. So, one person can have both things but the MCR eF authorized cost report filer role doesn't grant the other.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. And then I believe that is all. Oh, give us one minute please. Sorry about that.

What is the label for the MCR eF request access link in the CMS Enterprise Portal? I cannot seem to find it. PS&R STAR is listed there but not MCR eF.



Geoff Kuhn: For users going into the EIDM portal and looking for application, the MCRéF role is under the PS&R application. So, if you can find the PS&R application in the EIDM and say add additional roles or request roles with that, MCRéF will be an option under the list of PS&R roles.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. That should – okay. A moment, there are a couple of new questions coming in.

We're getting some questions about where the slides can be found. The slides can be found in the lower left on file and they can also be found on this link — go— [G-O.cms.gov/npc](https://www.g-o.cms.gov/npc). You'll look for this call with the date October 15th and you'll see this presentation and after about two weeks you will see the transcript and the audio recording.

Give us one more minute while we see if there are other questions coming in.

Can you submit a wet signature scanned into MCRéF and not submit an e-signature page?

Geoff Kuhn: The key to this question is that a wet signature has to be on the Worksheet S of the cost report or the equivalent sort of signature page. That is the e-signature page where the check box is present. So, you can't just take some other document and sign it, submit it, it needs to be Worksheet S. But that can be a thing you print it out and signed and check the box on and then scanned.

Diane Maupai: Thank you. And I'd like to make a clarification. I understand that people who accessed this webcast through the emergency link you can't download the slides from this platform so my apologies there. So, what you would do is go to the link I mentioned before — go — [G-O.cms.gov/npc](https://www.g-o.cms.gov/npc) and that NPC stands for National Provider Call.

Do you have to upload and submit your cost report at one time or can you go in and out of the portal and can two different people upload files and then submit them?

Geoff Kuhn: The way that the system is set up—and it—you need to have all your files together when you go to submit. There's no sort of saved session where I attach a few files and I come back later to attach the rest. Once you're log in that's your session is active you need to make all of your selections in one session and submit.

I think you have between 15 and 20 minutes before the application overall times out due to sort of EIDM security restrictions, but if you're having errors when interacting with the system then that will be extended. But overall one person, have the files together or somewhere on your network drive, go in make your selections and click submit.

Additional Information

Diane Maupai: Okay, thank you. Since that is all the questions we have today, we're going to break now. And if you have a question later you can see the resources on slide 38 or the contact information on slide 40. On slide 41 you'll find information on how to evaluate your experience with today's event. We'll also push out the link to the evaluation to our webcast participants right now.



Evaluations are anonymous, confidential and voluntary but we hope you'll take a few minutes to evaluate your experience with today's event. As a reminder, disable your pop-up blockers for best results. An audio recording and transcript will be available in about two weeks and that link again is go.cms.gov/npc.

Again, I'd like to apologize for the delay caused by technical difficulties on our end and I'd like to thank our presenters and everyone who joined us for today's Medicare Learning Network event: Submitting your Medicare Part A Cost Report Electronically. Have a great day.

Operator: Thank you for participating in today's conference call, you may now disconnect. Presenters please hold.