Electronic Submission of Medical Documentation

Introducing esMD to Providers, Review Contractors, and Health Information Handlers

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

Center for Program Integrity (CPI)

Provider Compliance Group (PCG)

Need for Additional Documentation

- **Medicare Fee-For-Service (FFS) Program makes billions of dollars in estimated improper payments.**

- **CMS employs several types of Review Contractors (RCs) to measure, prevent, identify, and correct these improper payments.**

- **RCs identify improper payments by selecting a small sample of claims, requesting and reviewing medical documentation from the provider.**

- **RCs request medical documentation by sending a paper letter to the provider - Additional Documentation Request (ADR).**

- **Provider responds with the appropriate documentation – ADR response via Mail/Fax.**

- **esMD (Electronic Submission of Medical Documentation) was introduced as a secure electronic communication channel for the exchange of supporting documentation between the Providers and RCs.**

esMD Overview

The Electronic Submission of Medical Documentation (esMD) provides a secure and electronic channel for this exchange between the Provider community and RCs

- **Medicare Fee-for-Service (FFS) providers and suppliers can send the following via esMD**

  - Responses to Additional Documentation Requests (ADRs)

  - First and Second level appeal requests

  - Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) and Durable Medical Equipment (DME) discussion requests

  - Advanced Determination of Medicare Coverage (ADMC) requests

  - Unsolicited claim related documentation/Paperwork (PWK)

  - Prior Authorization (PA) requests along with supporting documentation

- **Medicare FFS providers and suppliers can receive**

  - Electronic Medical Documentation Requests (eMDR)

  - Prior Authorization Responses and Decision Letters

  - Review Results Letters

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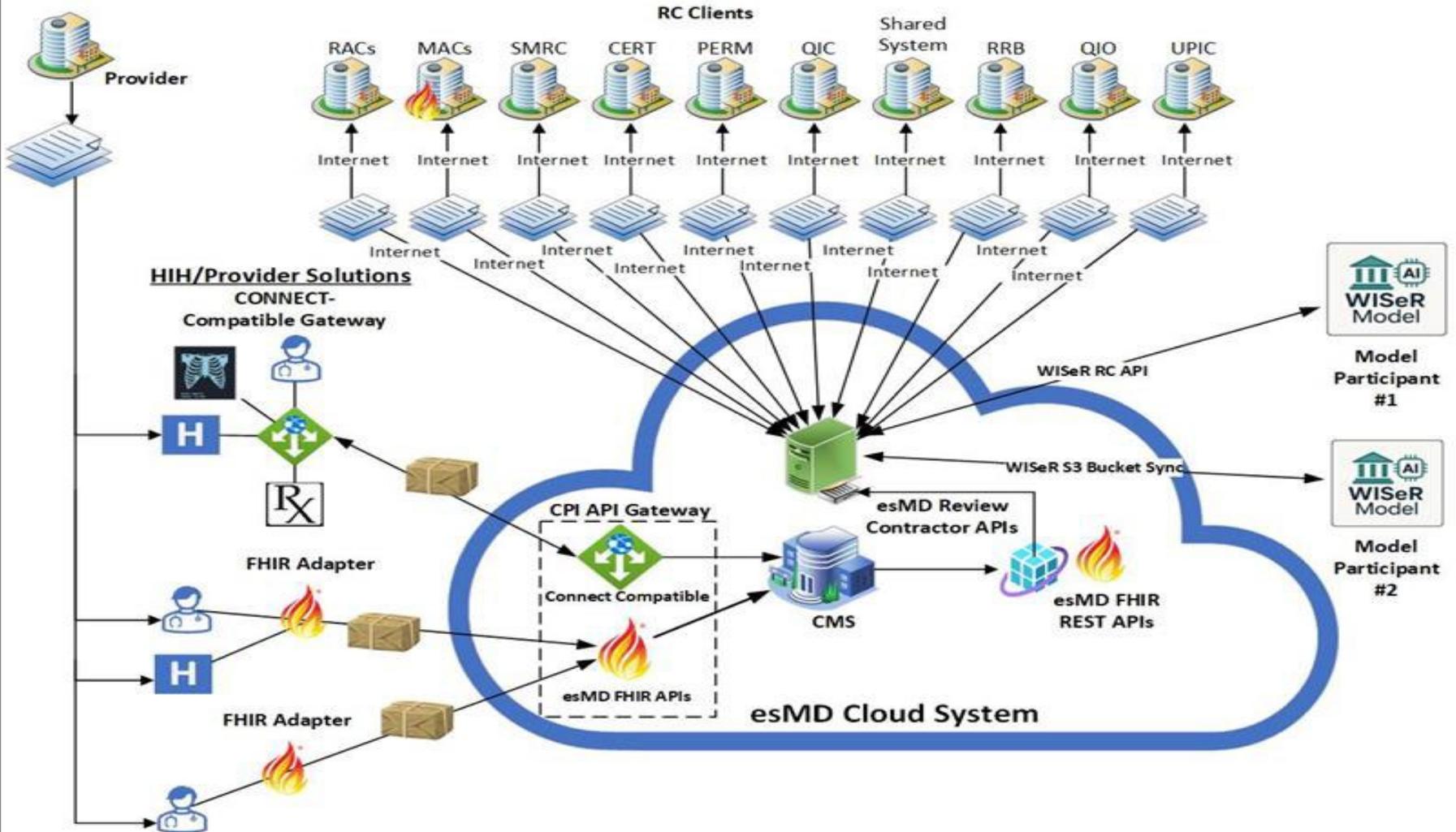**M D** Submission
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esMD Overview

- **The esMD system provides custom implementation of the Health Level 7 (HL7) Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources(FHIR) healthcare data standard APIs where HIHs can interact with esMD APIs for submission and retrieval of medical documentations**

- **Health Information Handlers (HIHs) are organizations that develop REST APIs to facilitate exchange of documents between the Providers and CMS.**

- **Providers can exchange transactions with esMD either by becoming an HIH themselves or by using the services of an HIH.**

Benefits of using esMD

Review Contractors conduct [Improper Payment](#) Reviews to identify, correct and prevent improper payments by selecting a small sample of claims to verify provider's compliance with Medicare rules. esMD enables Providers to submit requested documentation electronically and benefits them as below :

- **Quicker turnaround**

    - Providers have reported the payment turnaround when using esMD is 6 days as opposed to the paper process which is approximately 3 weeks.

- **Reduced labor costs**

    - esMD helps to reduce the amount of labor required to fulfill these requests, by no longer having to print and mail paper, feed a fax machine or burn CDs.

- **Reduced hard costs**

    - esMD can also reduce hard costs like shipping and handling expenses.

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esMD Process Flow

Providers who want to submit via esMD

- **STEP 1:**

    Find out if your Review Contractors accept esMD (Slide11 and 12 have the names of the RCs).

- **STEP 2:**

    Submit documentation to esMD by building your own gateway or by using the services of an HIH. (Slide 10 has the names of the HIHs).

    Note: For more information, visit

    https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Computer-Data-and-Systems/ESMD/Information_for_Providers.html

HIHs using esMD

CMS Certified esMD HIHs	
• Inovalon (formerly ABILITY Network)	• MRO
• Bluemark, LLC	• SSI
• CIOX Health	• SunCoast RHIO, Inc.
• Claim MD	• Synergy Health Services
• Cobius	• UPMC
• Craneware, Inc.	• Vyne Medical
• Digital HIE	• Waystar (formerly eSolutions, Inc.)
• HFMI, LLC (X12 only)	

Note: HIHs are not funded by CMS.

For an updated list, visit: **www.cms.gov/esMD**

RCs accepting via esMD

DME MACs	
DME MAC A & D (Noridian)	DME MAC JB & JC (CGS)
MACs	
MAC JE & JF, SMRC (Noridian)	MAC J15 (CGS)
MAC J6 & JK (NGS)	MAC JN (First Coast Service Options)
MAC JJ, JM & RRB (Palmetto)	MAC J5 & J8 (WPS)
MAC JH & JL (Novitas Solutions)	
QICs	
QIC Part A West & DME (Maximus)	QICs Part A East, Part B North & South (C2C)
RACs	
Performant (RAC Region 1 & 2)	Cotiviti (RAC Region 3, 4 & 5)
RRB	**SMRC**
Palmetto	Noridian

RCs accepting via esMD

UPICs	
UPIC West & Southwest (Qlarant)	UPIC Northeast & Southeast (Safeguard Services)
UPIC Mid West (Covent Bridge)	
CERT	
Empower AI (formerly NCI)	
PERM	
Empower AI (formerly NCI)	
QIOs	
Livanta (HWDRG)	

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HIH Gateway services

A Health Information Handler (HIH) is any company that handles health information on behalf of the Provider(s). Examples include

- **Health Information Exchange (HIE)/Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO)**

- **Release of Information (ROI) Vendor** A company that manages the release of information for providers. Their services may include logging and tracking the request, retrieving the patient record from multiple locations in multiple formats, identifying the information needed to fulfill the request, requesting additional authorization, if needed, packaging and mailing.

- **Electronic Health Record (EHR) Vendor**

- **Claim Clearinghouse**

- **Health Internet Service Provider (HISP)** An entity that provides services that enable providers or health organizations to exchange health information using the internet

How can an Organization become an HIH?

- Complete the esMD HIH Agreement.

- Ensure that appropriate Business Associate Agreements are in place with your Providers.

- Build an Application Programming Interface (API) to interact with esMD FHIR APIs. Refer to esMD FHIR Implementation Guide - Home - ESMD FHIR Implementation Guide v1.0.0

- Contact the CMS esMD Support Team for more details, esMD_Support@cms.hhs.gov.

Contact Information

CMS Business Owner: **esMDBusinessOwners@cms.hhs.gov**

CMS esMD Website: **www.cms.gov/esMD**