



Standards and Certification Final Rule Facts-a-at-Glance

The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act provides HHS with the authority to establish programs to improve health care quality, safety, and efficiency through the promotion of health information technology (HIT), including electronic health records (EHRs) and private and secure electronic health information exchange.

The HITECH Act directs the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) to support and promote meaningful use of certified EHR technology nationwide through the adoption of standards, implementation specifications, and certification criteria as well as the establishment of certification programs for HIT.

About the Standards and Certification Criteria Final Rule

Two companion regulations were announced today. ONC's final rule complements a final rule announced by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) that defines the minimum requirements that providers must meet through their use of EHRs in order to qualify for payments under the Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive programs. The ONC rule establishes the required capabilities and related standards and implementation specifications that Certified EHR Technology will need to include to, at a minimum, support the achievement of meaningful use Stage 1 by eligible health care providers under the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Program regulations.

What Standards and Certification Criteria Mean for Health Care Providers

Both the Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive programs include a requirement related to certified EHR technology. Under the Medicare EHR incentive program, eligible health care providers may receive incentive payments if they adopt and meaningfully use certified EHR technology (Complete EHR or EHR Modules that have been certified by an Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology-Authorized Testing and Certification Body (ONC-ATCB)). Under the Medicaid EHR incentive program, eligible health care providers may first adopt, implement, or upgrade to certified EHR technology in their first year of the program and receive an incentive payment before having to meaningfully use certified EHR technology. The standards and certification criteria final rule specifies the necessary technological capabilities EHR technology will need to include, for the EHR technology to be certified by an ONC-ATCB. Additionally, it specifies how eligible health care providers will need to use the certified EHR technology to meet applicable meaningful use requirements.

Connecting America for Better Health



What Standards and Certification Criteria Mean for Developers of EHR Technology

Developers of EHR technology who design their EHR technology in accordance with this final rule and subsequently get their EHR technology tested and certified by an ONC authorized testing and/or certified entity are assured that their EHR technology can be adopted by eligible health care providers who seek to achieve meaningful use Stage 1.

For other questions related to the standards and certification criteria, please email onc.request@hhs.gov

- Standards and Certification Criteria, visit <http://healthit.hhs.gov/standardsandcertification>
- Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive programs, visit <http://www.cms.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/>