



**New York State Department of Health
Medicaid Incentive Payment System (MIPS)
External Stakeholder Feedback**

New York State Dental Association

April 21, 2010 | 3:00 – 3:30 p.m.

New York State Department of Health

99 Washington Avenue

Albany, New York

Introduction

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), signed into law on February 17, 2009, by President Obama, provided billions of dollars to states to implement Electronic Health Record (EHR) technologies. Administered through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Provider Incentive Payment Program provides incentive payments to eligible Medicaid and Medicare providers and hospitals to achieve "meaningful use" of EHR technologies. To inform and clarify the incentive payment program to the Medicaid provider community, the New York State Department of Health (DOH) Office of Health Insurance Programs (OHIP) provided more than thirty (30) presentations to stakeholder groups from throughout New York State. A number of stakeholder groups, in response, offered comment on the incentive program.

This document represents a summary of comments from the New York State Dental Association (NYSDA), a constituent of the American Dental Association. NYSDA was established by an act of the New York State Legislature in 1868 as the professional association for dentistry. NYSDA represents more than 14,000 dentists throughout New York State.

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New York State Dental Association – Background



The New York State Dental Association (NYSDA) represents the interests of more than 14,000 dentists in New York State (76% of practicing dentists in the state). NYSDA focuses on legislative affairs, business development, and clinical and educational programs that promote the art and science of dentistry. Providing feedback to the New York State Office for Health Insurance Programs (OHIP) were the organization's Executive Director, Dr. Mark Feldman, and Assistant Executive Director, Judith L. Shub. Dr. Feldman's and Ms. Shub's comments are summarized below.

Eligibility

The Medicaid Incentive Payment System (MIPS) is targeted to provide funding to Eligible Providers for the reimbursement of Health Information Technology purchases. Currently under the plan, dentists are considered Eligible Providers, be they hospital-based, clinic-based, or some other model. However, to actually receive incentive payments, a dentist's total number of patient encounters must be at 30%, a level viewed as limiting by many dentists.

NYSDA is concerned about the threshold criteria for eligibility, which will minimize the number of dentists who will be eligible for this stimulus funding. NYSDA recognizes that these eligibility limitations, and the resulting small number of practices in the information network, will compromise the project's potential effectiveness overall.

“On the referral cross back, one of the things we've been developing nationally and implementing state-by-state is a greatly simplified caries assessment tool that will be available to pediatricians.”

Mark J. Feldman, DMD

The Right Kind of Information for Quality Dental Care

The kind of information dentists need to access in a statewide network is unique given the nature of their care. Dr. Feldman and Ms. Shub provided feedback regarding possible links to oncology, cardiology, blood disorders, and most certainly fluoride treatments. As Ms. Shub explained, “We're seeing increasing research suggesting simple diagnostic tests through saliva for a variety of cancers and other ailments. A system that enabled physicians and dentists to access that kind of patient information would be extremely significant.” Further, approximately 40% of all children in New York State are Medicaid members, so information regarding fluoride treatments and sealants is critical.

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Judith L. Shub, PhD

Upgrades

Dental software, whether for clinical purposes or billing, is very specialized, and dentists are cautious about new implementations and the expectant shelf life of any new system. The current MIPS strategy is to support these purchases

and provide for upgrades and changes. The New York State Dental Association encourages OHIP to continue to support this strategy. Current Medicaid billing and dental procedure codes and patient verification systems need to be aligned.

Reaching Out to Dentists

NYSDA has developed an online survey tool to collect information from their members regarding Health Information Technology. Combined with similar outreach efforts, NYSDA is well positioned to help OHIP move forward with a State Medicaid Health Information Technology Plan that supports the special needs of dentists and dental patients.

