

Upcoming conferences

MMCS Regional Meetings

Medicaid Managed Care Services (MMCS), a division of AFMC, is holding educational conferences across the state in 2011. The purpose of these conferences is to strengthen the collaboration between Arkansas primary care providers and MMCS. This can help providers more effectively manage PCP caseloads and increase continuity of care. MMCS also supports beneficiary access to Medicaid programs and services, clarifies new and existing guidelines for participation in Arkansas Medicaid, and examines opportunities for clinical improvement in Medicaid care delivery.

Meetings will be held at the following locations and dates:

- Fort Smith — May 5
- Jonesboro — May 18
- Texarkana — June 16

For more info or to register for a meeting, go to: www.afmc.org/mmc regional

CE credits have been applied for.

Quality Conference

AFMC's 18th annual Quality Conference will be held May 10-11 in Little Rock, AR at the DoubleTree Hotel. The event aims to educate health care providers about ways to improve care across clinical settings: Long term care, home health care, hospitals and physician offices. The conference provides opportunities to share information, ideas and concerns about Arkansas' health care through lectures, peer presentations and collaboration. Also, two representatives from CMS will present information.

The core educational content will begin at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10 and will conclude in the afternoon on Wednesday, May 11. This year's theme, "The landscape of health care is changing," underscores the importance of all providers and stakeholders in improving health care and will be the central topic of the conference. One of the many focus areas will be **HIE/HIT, and EHR vendors** will exhibit as well.

Visit www.qualityconference.org for more information.

CE credits have been applied for.

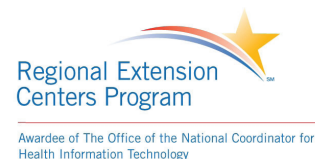
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The Newsletter

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Registration tips

What do I need to do prior to registering for my EHR incentives?

- If you have chosen Medicare EHR incentives, there is a validation process to ensure that your PECOS enrollment information and tax payer identification number is correct. If it is not, this process gives you time to correct it prior to attesting to meaningful use measures.
- Registration is not required before starting your 90 day EHR reporting period for providers seeking Medicare EHR incentives.

CMS Identity and Access Management (I&A) user ID and password

- Eligible professionals can use the same user ID and password they use for the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES). This is also the same user ID and password that is used to access PECOS.
- If you have chosen Medicaid EHR incentives, this option will not be available until Spring 2011. Visit www.hitarkansas.com frequently for the latest updates.

Information you will need when you register:

■ Eligible Professionals

- National Provider Identifier (NPI)
- National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES) user ID and password
- Payee tax identification number
- Payee National Provider Identifier (NPI)

■ Hospitals

- CMS Identity and Access Management (I&A) user ID and password
- CMS Certification Number (CCN)
 - NPI (National Provider Identifier)
 - Hospital tax identification number

NOTE: You do not have to provide information on the certified EHR technology you are using when you register. However, this information is required for attestation.

Visit www.hitarkansas.com to see a video tutorial of the provider registration process.

EHR vendor update

As of March 31, HITArkansas has entered into agreements with nine preferred EHR vendors:

- ABEL Medical Software, Inc.
- eClinicalWorks
- e-MDs
- Ingenix
- Medical Informatics Engineering
- Sage Healthcare Division
- Sevocity
- SOAPware, Inc.
- SuccessEHS

All of these preferred vendors have agreed to incorporate specific terms in the provider contracts and will offer special Regional Extension Center pricing. We are working closely with these vendors regarding provider outreach and communications activities.

“As we work to assist Arkansas’ health care providers in adopting or upgrading EHRs, we are excited to work with these companies as preferred vendors,” said Ray Hanley, President and CEO of AFMC. “These vendors deliver a wide range of HIT solutions, enabling providers to offer more efficient, faster and more cost effective care to patients across the state.”

Our preferred vendor listing does not restrict us from working with other EHR products, as long as that product is ONC-ATCB certified.

PPCPs signed with HITArkansas



To date, 584 providers have signed up for our services. Nationally, more than 53,000 providers are participating with RECs.



Provider Spotlight

Dr David Matthews - Pediatrician
The Children's Clinic, Jonesboro, AR

Dr. David Matthews, a pediatrician at The Children's Clinic in Jonesboro, AR, has been using some form of EHRs since the early nineties. However, it was in 2005 when he began using an EHR system as we know them today. HITArkansas has interviewed Dr. Matthews to learn more about his clinic's experience adopting and getting up to speed with EHRs. Excerpts of his comments are below, and the full interview can be found on our website, www.hitarkansas.com.

What were the immediate positive effects of using an EHR you and your practice experienced?

We could read everything! This saved transcription costs immediately. No more lost charts. We saw the same number of patients within 4 weeks as before implementation. We began rethinking how we see patients without paper in the way—with its shuffling, bulk and legibility issues. The EHR gave us new eyes to see problems that were integral to paper charting, and allowed to see if this method worked better in seeing patients. Often, we saw that our desired solution was either already programmed and we just had to find it, or it was possible if we just modified the way we did the work.

What are the long-term benefits of using an EHR you and your practice experience?

We now have access from home and vacation and meetings. Some might say sadly so, but it is a much better way to take care of patients. As a physician, you just don't know when you might need to know about the last steps taken with a patient, and wherever we are, we can speak intelligently.

I think our charts are more useful for those reviewing for legal records or research records. We print out a dated and certified copy and all are happy. Transfer of records is done through a fax server so we don't print and send records anymore—they are sent directly. It is easier to be HIPPA compliant; everyone is password-protected for access. We have never been hacked in 5 years that we know of. Last but not least, post-it pads are lasting for an eternity in our office.

Workforce update

National Park Community College (NPCC), in Hot Springs, Arkansas, has been preparing students for various HIT workforce roles. NPCC now offers training in a new workforce role, implementation manager, which is appropriate for students who have either a health care or an IT background. Workers in this role provide on-site management of mobile adoption support teams for the period of time before and during implementation of HIT systems in clinical and public health settings.

“The classes have given me an understanding in teaching the EHR conversion process to my peers.”

NPCC student Jenny Hatcher, RN, BA

Changes to NPCC's programs

- Cost decrease from \$500 to \$300 per workforce role. Tuition is still reimbursed upon successful course completion.
- Payment plan option - \$150 for each block of classes (a total of two blocks per workforce role).
- Classes begin every few weeks. Please call for enrollment dates.

NOTE: NPCC's first group of students will complete the program on March 31, 2011.

Please visit NPCC's website at www.npcc.edu/healthit for more information and an application form.

Medicaid Update

As announced in a recent letter from Gene Gessow to providers, Arkansas Medicaid plans to launch provider enrollment in Spring 2011 and begin distributing EHR incentive payments in June or July of this year. In the meantime, please update or confirm your National Provider Identifier (NPI) profile.