



JUN 9 2015

Dear Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing to request your review and comment on the enclosed Indian Health Service (IHS) Multi-Purpose Agreement (MPA). This document is necessary for Tribal and Urban Indian use of the Meaningful Use Stage 2 Certified IHS Resource and Patient Management System (RPMS) Electronic Health Record (EHR).

Tribal and Urban Indian health care sites using the IHS RPMS EHR will soon have access to a significantly expanded set of enhancements that will enable Federal, Tribal, and Urban Indian health programs to work cooperatively to improve the quality of patient care. These new enhancements include the Master Patient Index (MPI), Health Information Exchange (HIE), Patient Health Record (PHR) portal, RPMS DIRECT Messaging, and access to Healthway's national eHealth Exchange. Given the focus on enhanced data sharing capabilities, the IHS is collectively referring to these enhancements as the RPMS Network.

In order to use the enhanced capabilities of the RPMS Network, Tribal and Urban Indian health programs will need to sign the enclosed MPA and agree to its terms to access the RPMS Network. The MPA is designed to establish binding standards for accessing and sharing patient data. The agreement requires participating organizations to abide by a common set of terms and conditions in order to create a framework of trust between all organizational participants to support the privacy, confidentiality, and security of the health data being exchanged on our patients' behalf. The MPA will also help us to maintain compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) Privacy, Security, and Breach rules and other applicable laws and Federal regulations.

The RPMS Network offers new features that will improve access to essential health information at the point of patient care and will provide new options for promoting health communications for patients and health care providers. These tools address the requirements established by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the HHS Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) detailed in the 2014 Certified EHR rules that enable eligible health care providers and hospitals to achieve Meaningful Use (MU) in Stage 2. The RPMS Network enables access by health care providers to patient health information through the HIE for permitted purposes, allows patients access to their own RPMS data through the PHR, and also supports the ability for patients to send secure and encrypted e-mails to their health care team using the RPMS DIRECT e-mail system. These tools can improve the quality of patient care and increase patient satisfaction.

Accessing the RPMS Network is optional. If your site decides against using the new functionality, it will not affect your existing RPMS/EHR interface. However, the RPMS Network sets of enhancements are components of MU and can contribute to the ability of eligible providers and hospitals to receive EHR MU Incentive Payments.

The IHS Office of Information Technology (OIT) provided an informational session of an overview of the MPA and responded to questions. The recorded session can be found on the IHS Meaningful Use Web site at: <http://www.ihs.gov/meaningfuluse/>.

A draft copy of the MPA and a joinder agreement can also be accessed online on the IHS Meaningful Use Web site listed above. Please share this notice with your health care administrators, health information technology leadership, and others, as appropriate. Your comments may be submitted to CDR Mark Rives, Chief Information Officer (CIO), IHS, by e-mail at urbanconfer@ihs.gov.

The IHS is committed to meaningful conferring with Urban Indian Health Programs as we advance health information technology in Indian Country. I look forward to your views, comments, and working with you to bring change and improvement to the IHS.

Sincerely,

/Robert G. McSwain/

Robert G. McSwain
Acting Director

Enclosure: Indian Health Service (IHS) Multi-Purpose Agreement (MPA)
Joinder Agreement