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**Sent:** Wednesday, November 30, 2016 2:29 PM  
**To:** Siciliano, Lorraine <Lorraine.Siciliano@vermont.gov>  
**Subject:** VT Medicaid EHRIP Updates: When to Apply; 2016 is the Last Year to Begin; MACRA/MIPS; Changes to MU Objectives for PY2016

To All Vermont Medicaid EHR Incentive Program participants:

**WHEN TO APPLY FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2016**

Program Year 2016 EHRIP applications are now being accepted, but your ability to proceed in the MAPIR attestation system will depend upon your progress to date. CMS recently ruled that the 90-day EHR Reporting Period for providers demonstrating Meaningful Use will be applicable to Program Year 2016 and Program Year 2017. Modifications to MAPIR will be completed in early January to accommodate the change to the EHR Reporting Period. If you are submitting an application for the first time in Program Year 2016, either for Adopt/Implement/Upgrade or for meeting Meaningful Use, you are able to proceed now. If you are a returning provider applying for a second-year payment and demonstrating Meaningful Use, you may also proceed now with your applications. However, if you are in Payment Year 3 or higher, you must wait to start a Program Year 2016 application until 1/12/16. Any such applications started before then must be aborted and re-started on or after that date. **PLEASE NOTE: The MAPIR system will not be available to start any applications between 1/1/17 – 1/11/17.**

The grid below summarizes when you can access MAPIR to apply for a Program Year 2016 EHRIP payment:

PY2016 Payment Year	PY2016 EHRIP Participation & Application Status	Meaningful Use EHR Reporting Period	When You Can Access MAPIR to Apply: <b>Deadline for All to Submit is 3/31/17</b>
1	A/I/U (Last Year to BEGIN!)	Not applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can apply now through 12/31/16</li> <li>• Cannot access MAPIR 1/1/17 – 1/11/17</li> <li>• Can apply 1/12/17 – 3/31/17</li> </ul>
1	First Year meeting Meaningful Use	90 Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can apply now through 12/31/16</li> <li>• Cannot access MAPIR 1/1/17 – 1/11/17</li> <li>• Can apply 1/12/17 – 3/31/17</li> </ul>
2	First Year meeting Meaningful Use	90 Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can apply now through 12/31/16</li> <li>• Cannot access MAPIR 1/1/17 – 1/11/17</li> <li>• Can apply 1/12/17 – 3/31/17</li> </ul>
3 – 6	2nd, 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> or 5 <sup>th</sup> Year meeting Meaningful Use	90 Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Do NOT start application before 1/12/17</b></li> <li>• <b>Must apply between 1/12/17 – 3/31/17</b></li> </ul>

**2016 IS THE LAST YEAR TO BEGIN THE MEDICAID EHRIP**

Program Year 2016 is the last year to qualify for the Electronic Health Record Incentive Program. All Eligible providers have until March 31st, 2017 to complete their registrations and to submit their applications. If you have new providers in your practice that may qualify to participate, visit our website to assess their eligibility and to get them started: <http://healthdata.vermont.gov/ehrip/2016/FirstTime>

**NEW QUALITY PROGRAM INITIATIVES: MACRA/MIPS**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently finalized its policy implementing the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) and the Advanced Alternative Payment Model (APM) incentive payment provisions in the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA). These initiatives are collectively referred to as the ‘Quality Payment Program.’

What does MIPS mean for the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program?

MIPS applies to physicians and clinicians providing services under Medicare Part B. **MIPS does not replace the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program, which will continue through 2021.** Eligible providers participating in the Vermont Medicaid EHRIP will continue to attest to receive their maximum number (six) of yearly incentive payments. If those providers are also Medicare Part B clinicians, they may also participate in MIPS.

**Milestones and Deadlines:** The Quality Payment Program's first performance period opens on January 1, 2017 and closes December 31, 2017. Participation in MIPS can start as early as January 1, 2017 or as late as October 2, 2017. The first payment adjustments based on performance go into effect on January 1, 2019.

**More information:** Subscribers of the EHR listserv are encouraged to sign up for the new CMS Quality Payment Program listserv, which will provide news and updates on new resources and website updates, reminders for deadlines, and CMS trainings and webinars. To subscribe, visit the Quality Payment Program [portal](#) and select "Subscribe to Email Updates" in the footer. The [Education & Tools](#) page includes program resources to help you learn more about eligibility and how to participate.

## CHANGES TO SPECIFIC EHRIP OBJECTIVES FOR PY2016

- **Objective 9, Secure Messaging:** During payment year 2015 it was required that EHR Secure Messaging be "Fully Enabled" to indicate the use of secure messaging to communicate with patients on relevant health information. In MAPIR, the Objective was configured to be a "Yes/No" response. The requirement has changed for 2016 applications as indicated by CMS: In order to pass this measure, at least one patient-initiated message with provider response is now required. The action for the numerator must occur within the calendar year but may occur before, during or after the EHR reporting period if that period is less than one full calendar year. In MAPIR, Objective 9 now requires a numerator and denominator.
- **Objective 10, Public Health Reporting:** In Program Year 2015, EPs that were scheduled to meet Stage 1 MU were required to meet only one measure. For Program Year 2016, all EPs must meet **two measures**.
- **Alternate Exclusions:** Many of the Alternate exclusions ("*did not intend to report*") that were available in 2015 are not applicable in 2016. Review this [fact sheet](#) for an overview and more details about alternate exclusions for certain objectives and measures in 2016.

The CMS "[What You Need to Know for 2016](#)" tip sheet has additional guidance for EPs participating in Program Year 2016.

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If you are aware of anyone who would like to receive our EHRIP email updates, or if you would like to be removed from this distribution list, please forward the updated information to [ahs.dvhaEHRIP@vermont.gov](mailto:ahs.dvhaEHRIP@vermont.gov).

Don't hesitate to [contact the Vermont Medicaid EHRIP Team](#) with any questions, and be sure to check out the [Vermont Medicaid EHRIP website](#) for important information about the program.

Thank you,  
Lorraine

**Lorraine Siciliano**

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