



PODIATRY BILLING SERVICES



EMR Options?

The time for making a decision regarding implementation of an EMR is fast approaching. This decision will financially impact each of us and our practices. By June 30, 2011 we have to attest to having sent 10 e-prescriptions to qualify for a 1% increase in Medicare reimbursement. For those practices who don't participate, there will be a 1% decrease in reimbursement.

There are few differences between most EMR software. They must satisfy "Meaningful Use" criteria set by the government for the physician to be eligible for the \$44K stimulus money over the next five years. The distinguishing feature for each system appears to be the initial setup and implementation costs and the recurrent monthly fees.

Today, most EMR systems are web based, but still require a significant investment in computer servers to warehouse the data. Protecting the data is another issue rarely discussed by doctors. The servers alone can cost upwards of \$50K. There are typically additional fees such as hosting the server in a secure environment (collocation with back up redundancy and multiple dedicated high speed lines assuring continuous access) and maintenance and support of the system. Whichever system you choose, it must be integrated into a Practice Management System (several thousand dollars) to qualify for stimulus money.

The monthly cost for most EMR's typically exceeds \$500 per doctor. This usually doesn't include setup and training or the practice management system integration fee. Through an "economy of scale" Podiatry Billing Services is working to reduce the cost of the EMR to less than \$500 per month with **"no additional setup, training, or support fees"**.

In conclusion, there appear to be four basic options:

1. Acquire an EMR (prior to June 30, 2011) and submit 10 e-prescriptions to avoid a 1% reduction in Medicare reimbursement and be eligible for a 1% Medicare fee increase
2. Implement only an e-prescribe program (approximately \$50 per month) to qualify for the 1% Medicare fee increase
3. Implement a non-certified EMR at minimal cost with e-prescribe capabilities
4. No action

Contact us to discuss how we can help you.