

## Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Offer 5.1% Payment Increases for 2009

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Physicians can earn an extra 5.1% from Medicare in 2009, but there is a catch!

During the summer, Congress passed a 1.1% increase in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) for the 2009 calendar year. Additionally, if a Physician adopts a CCHIT-certified Electronic Medical Record (EMR) and participates in e-prescribing and the Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI), that figure will jump another 4%, 2% for each. All things considered, this is a welcome relief--most years, physicians agonize if Congress will *reduce* the Medicare reimbursement rates.

“E-prescribing can greatly reduce the number of medication errors that jeopardize the health and safety of Medicare patients and waste precious health care dollars treating conditions that never should have happened,” said CMS acting administrator Kerry Weems. “The Institute of Medicine says more than 1.5 million Americans are injured every year by drug errors. E-prescribing lets providers know—up front—their patients’ medication history and the risk of dangerous interactions.” Clearly, CMS recognizes that prevention may actually save more money than the incentives would cost.

Currently, Eclipsys’ PeakPractice™ EMR is CCHIT 2006 Ambulatory Certified which qualifies for the Medicare participation plan. This will add a healthy return on investment for those providers that have a sizable Medicare patient population. Essentially, for every \$100,000 dollars a physician collects from Medicare, they can now collect \$105,500. This increase of \$5,500 adds another measurable return for using a certified EMR.