



GAO Report: CMS Could Be Doing More Under EHR Program

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The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has reported that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) could be doing more to ensure its incentive payments under the electronic health record (EHR) program are proper and legitimate.

CMS has paid more than \$3.1 billion to providers in incentive payments since the Medicare and Medicaid EHR program began in 2011. Providers are eligible for payments if they adopt EHR technology and use it in a meaningful way. But to receive the payments, providers must meet eligibility requirements and report certain information to CMS.

In its report – entitled *First Year of CMS's Incentive Programs Shows Opportunities to Improve Processes to Verify Providers Met Requirements* – GAO recommended, among other things, ways for CMS to improve the integrity of Medicare EHR incentive payments.

The report suggests that CMS conduct prepayment verifications rather than post-payment audits. This would allow CMS to avoid the “pay and chase” involved with recovering improper payments.

As for the Medicaid EHR program, GAO encouraged CMS to offer states the option of having CMS collect meaningful use attestations from Medicaid providers on the states' behalf.

The full GAO report can be found [here](#).