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Leveraging the “Meaningful Use” Objectives – Fitting Patient Safety into the Hospital’s EHR Strategy

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Question
Which will receive more funding under the Stimulus Legislation? “Cash for Clunkers” or “Meaningful Use”?

Answer: “Meaningful Use”...by a Factor of 10!

History

- The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act—Part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009
- Earmarked significant incentive funds for Electronic Health Record (EHR) adoption
- Congress did not simply want adoption of EHRs – they wanted to ensure that there would be “meaningful use” of EHRs

Analyze

- Review objectives with an eye to those that hold the potential to have a “high impact” on safety at your organization
- Analyze both Core and Menu Objectives

Example List of Identified “High Impact” Core Objectives
- Maintain active medication list
- Maintain active medication allergy list
- Implement drug-drug and drug-allergy interaction checks
- Maintain an up-to-date problem list
- Provide patients with an electronic copy of their discharge instructions

Act

- Leverage your organization’s investment in attaining meaningful use objectives to support your patient safety process improvement programs

Meaningful Use Objectives

- Eligible Providers (Stage 1 Objectives)
  - 25 Objectives
  - 15 are required (“core objectives”)
  - 5 of the remaining 10 may be deferred (“menu objectives”)

- Hospitals (Stage 1 Objectives)
  - 24 Objectives
  - 14 are required (“core objectives”)
  - 5 of the remaining 10 may be deferred (“menu objectives”)

Case Study Example

- Meaningful Use Objective
  - Patient provided with an electronic copy of the discharge instructions

Implementation

- Use an automated informed consent solution (iMedConsent™, Dialog Medical, Atlanta, GA) in concert with the EHR (VistA CPRS, Department of Veterans Affairs)

Key Safety Factors

- Discharge instructions are accessible via the EHR (to the on-call nurse)

Results

- Observed a 270% reduction in the 14-day readmission rate

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