Applying for eRx Hardship Exemption

eRx eligible professionals (EP) will be subjected to the following payment incentives/adjustments.
“Successful electronic prescribers” must report at least 50 percent of the reportable cases on any eRx measure under PQRS, and electronically submit a “sufficient” number of prescriptions under Part D (as determined by the Secretary). Those who do not comply are penalized with the following payment adjustments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Payment Incentive if Successful (&quot;Bonus&quot;)</th>
<th>Payment Adjustment if Not Successful (&quot;Penalty&quot;)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>-1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Undetermined</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have not fulfilled the criteria for ten e-prescriptions by June 30, 2011, and if you meet any of the six hardship exemption categories, you can apply for a hardship exemption by November 1, 2011, via the website: http://www.qualitynet.org/pqrs, and select “Communication Support Page.”

Categories for Exemption:

There are six categories for which EPs can request a hardship exemption:

Claims-based exemption:
- Practices in a rural area with limited high speed Internet access (bill HCPCS G8642);
- Practices in an area with limited available pharmacies for electronic prescribing (bill HCPCS G8643);

Application-based exemption:
- EPs who register to participate in the Medicare/Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs and adopt Certified EHR Technology;
- Inability to electronically prescribe due to local, State, or Federal law or regulation;
- Limited prescribing activity; and/or
- Insufficient opportunities to report the eRx measure due to limitations of the measure’s denominator. This exemption category is intended for EPs who provide electronic prescriptions on a day different from the beneficiary's visit such as an EP who provides a prescription during a post-operative visit.

The electronic application form will require the following information:

1. “Identifying information” such as the TIN, NPI, name, mailing address, and email address of all affected EPs;
2. The significant hardship exemption category(ies) that apply;
3. A justification statement describing how complying with the eRx requirement during the reporting period would result in a significant hardship to the EP or group practice; and
4. An attestation of the accuracy of the information provided above (items 1-3).

Additionally, CMS may also request that the EP or group practice provide additional supporting documentation if there is insufficient information.

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1 Direct link to the hardship exemption page is: https://www.qualitynet.org/portal/server.pt/community/communications_support_system/234.
2 If you are having problems accessing the submission form, make sure the TLS 1 setting is “checked” by going to: Tools > Internet Options > AdvancedTab > select “Use TLS 1.0”. If you are having other issues, please contact the QualityNet Help Desk at 866-288-8912 or qnetsupport@sdps.org.