

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.

Year	Payment Incentive if Successful (“Bonus”)	Payment Adjustment if Not Successful (“Penalty”)
2012	1.0%	-1.0%
2013	0.5%	-1.5%
2014	Undetermined	-2.0%

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.”^{1,2}

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.

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 qnetssupport@sdps.org.