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Promoting Interoperability EHR Incentive Programs and NDIIS

What is the NDIIS?

The North Dakota Immunization Information System (NDIIS) is a confidential, population-based, computerized information system that attempts to collect vaccination data about all North Dakotans. The NDIIS is an important tool to increase and sustain high vaccination coverage by consolidating vaccination records of children from multiple providers, generating reminder and recall vaccination notices for each child and providing official vaccination forms and vaccination coverage assessments. Children are entered into the NDIIS at birth through a linkage with electronic birth records. An NDIIS vaccination record also can be initiated by a health-care provider at the time of a child's first immunization. The NDIIS has the capability of collecting vaccination data on adult patients, as well as children.

What is the Promoting Interoperability Program?

In 2009, as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Congress authorized more than $25 billion in incentive payments to hospitals and healthcare providers to facilitate the adoption of meaningful use of certified electronic health record systems (EHRs). In 2011, as an expansion of the original meaningful use incentive program, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) established the Promoting Interoperability Program.

To receive incentive payments, providers must meet and maintain a set of meaningful use measures using a certified EHR. The Promoting Interoperability Program used a three-stage approach, with each stage building on the preceding stage. Stage 3 established the final rule for receiving inventive payments through this program for 2017 and beyond. In 2018, the Promoting Interoperability Program "moved beyond the previous meaningful use requirements to a new phase of EHR measurement with an increased focus on interoperability and improving patient access to health information."[1]

For more information on the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs, visit www.cms.gov/ehrincentiveprograms/.

How Does the Promoting Interoperability Program Work With the NDIIS?

Public health and clinical data exchange is an objective of the Promoting Interoperability Program. Measure one of this objective requires reporting to an immunization registry, such as the NDIIS. In order to meet this measure, an eligible provider site must be in "active engagement…to submit immunization data and receive immunization forecasts and histories from the public health immunization registry/immunization information system (IIS)."[2]

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[1] Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Promoting Interoperability Programs. https://www.cms.gov/regulations-and-guidance/legislation/ehrincentiveprograms?redirect=/ehrincentiveprograms/

[2] Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2022 Medicare Promoting Interoperability Program Requirements. *Public Health and Clinical Data Exchange Objective Fact Sheet.* https://www.cms.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/2022%20Public%20Health%20and%20Clinical%20Data%20Exchange%20Objective%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf

North Dakota providers wishing to attest for this measure during their reporting period must be using a certified EHR that:

- supports HL7 version 2.5.1 release 1.5 messaging,
- SOAP web services transport,
- submission of National Drug Codes (NDCs) for administered immunizations, and
- supports a fully bi-directional interface, meaning the EHR can exchange both query and response (QBP/RSP) and submission/acknowledgement (VXU/AXK) messages with the NDIIS.

To be considered in "active engagement" with the NDIIS, a provider must meet one of the following conditions:

- The provider has submitted their Registration of Intent form and is currently waiting invitation from the NDIIS team to begin the formal on-boarding process.
- The provider is actively working with the NDIIS to complete the formal on-boarding or technical testing process.
- The provider has established a production interface between their EHR and the NDIIS and is actively submitting immunization data to the NDIIS.

What is the Status of NDIIS Interoperability with EHRs?

The NDIIS is currently connected to more than 450 individual provider locations, the state wide health information exchange (HIE), the North Dakota Health Information Network (NDHIN), and the North Dakota disease surveillance system, Maven. The NDIIS supports bi-directional messaging and SOAP web transport using the standard CDC WSDL for direct connections. Providers can also connect to the NDIIS via the NDHIN. Provider practices wanting to connect to the NDIIS must complete and submit the NDIIS Registration of Intent form. Providers will be prioritized for interoperability based on the volume of immunizations given and the readiness of the EHR to meet interoperability messaging requirements for immunizations based on the national standard.

What is the NDIIS-EHR Interoperability Testing Process?

The NDIIS interoperability team has developed an on-boarding and testing process that ensures the NDIIS will be ready to support eligible providers and hospitals in meeting the immunization Promoting Interoperability Program measure. Before the formal on-boarding testing process can begin, the provider must complete all required forms and agreements.

HL7 Specifications for NDIIS interoperability with EHRs are available at:
https://www.hhs.nd.gov/immunizations/ndiis/interoperability

If your organization is interested in connecting to the NDIIS, please fill out the NDIIS Registration of Intent and Roles and Responsibilities Matrix forms at:
https://www.hhs.nd.gov/immunizations/ndiis/interoperability

Providers connecting directly to the NDIIS must complete the Memorandum of Understanding found at: https://www.hhs.nd.gov/immunizations/ndiis/interoperability. Providers wishing to connect via the NDHIN should visit their website (https://www.nd.gov/itd/statewide-alliances/ndhin) to complete all required forms and agreements.

Once all required forms and agreements have been submitted, you will be placed in queue for connecting. The NDIIS team will reach out to the designated contacts to formally begin the on-boarding process.

Additional Information:

Additional information is available at https://www.hhs.nd.gov/immunizations/ndiis/interoperability by calling the North Dakota Department of Health at 701.328.3386 or toll-free at 800.472.2180.