

Patient Portal Requirement in Meaningful Use Guidance for Providers

What are the Meaningful Use Patient Portal Requirements?

- In order to successfully attest to Stage 1 or Stage 2 Meaningful Use, eligible professionals must fulfill the patient portal requirement for each stage. Below are additional details and tips for fulfilling this requirement.
- **Stage 1 Requirements:** As a core measure of Stage 1 Meaningful Use, eligible professionals must provide patients with the ability to view online, download, and transmit their health information. **Specifically, more than 50 percent of all unique patients seen by the eligible professional during the EHR reporting period must be provided timely online access to their health information subject to the eligible professional's discretion to withhold certain information.**
 - Eligible professionals are excluded from this measure if they neither order nor create any of the information listed for inclusion as part of the measure except for 'patient name' and 'providers' name and contact information'.
- **Stage 2 Requirements:** As a core measure of Stage 2 Meaningful Use, eligible professionals are required to provide patients with an electronic copy of their health information (diagnostic test results, problem lists, medication lists, and allergies) upon request. **Specifically, 50 percent of patients must have access to an electronic copy of their health information and 5 percent of patients must have used the capability to access and download their information.**
 - Eligible professionals are excluded from this measure if they do not order or create any of the information listed for inclusion as part of this measure.

Details Providers Should Know

- For both Stage 1 and Stage 2 measures, the health information must be available within four business days of when the information is available to the eligible professional.
- The health information content eligible professionals choose to provide is up to the individual provider, however, merely providing office visit and eRx information is not sufficient.
- 'Having access' to the health information means that the only thing standing between the patient and the health information is the patient doing something.
- The measure requires that 50 percent of all patient encounters, not just Medicare beneficiaries, have access to their health information.
- In a group practice, if multiple providers see a patient, it does not matter what information the patient views. That patient can count toward any provider who saw the patient during the reporting period.

Tips for Providers

- The whole staff should be involved in promoting the patient portal. The front office can display signs or posters, staff can distribute information brochures, and providers can include standard talking points to introduce the portal during patient visits.

- Some ideas for achieving the Stage 2 requirement that 5 percent of patients have used the capability to access and download their information include the following:
 - Log patients into the portal when they leave the office as part of the discharge process and hand them a copy of their electronic record.
 - Provide a registration kiosk or ipad in the waiting room and have staff assist patients with the process.