

## To Resolve Problems with EHR Incentive Program Registration, Follow CMS-Specified Process

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When registering for the CMS EHR Incentive Program, some physicians have encountered technical problems that prevent them from completing the registration process. The registration system sometimes links the National Provider Identifier (NPI) to old or incorrect payers or practice affiliations. If physicians miss the registration deadlines due to unresolved problems with the registration system, they may have to repeat the required 90 days of data collection or file an appeal with the CMS.

*When physicians encounter incorrect information or other difficulties with the CMS EHR Incentive Program registration system, they should be advised to follow a CMS-specified process to solve the problem.*

### Implementation

Some physicians have encountered problems when they try to register for the CMS EHR Incentive Program. For example, a physician might find that the practice affiliation retrieved with the NPI and Social Security number is incorrect. If the correct practice affiliation is not available to be selected, the provider should follow the process described below.

In response to a query from the CalHIPSO [REC](#) about a problem with the registration process, CMS provided the following information to help physicians who are experiencing difficulties during registration. The physician should be advised to follow this process:

1. Call the CMS EHR information help desk at 1-888-734-6433 (TTY 1-888-734-6563) and explain the problem.
2. If the first level of support is unable to solve the problem, request that the problem be escalated to the second level.
3. Work with the next level of support to address the problem.
4. In order to give appropriate assistance, the second-level help desk must understand the exact nature of the problem. In the example where the NPI and the practice affiliation do not match, the physician must say, "my PECOS information needs to be refreshed at the National Level Registry (NLR)." The Medicare Provider Enrollment, Chain, and Ownership System (PECOS), the authority file for the CMS Medicare payment program, maintains NPI and practice affiliation information for physicians.

## Things to Consider

Providers are strongly encouraged to register for the CMS EHR Incentive Program as soon as they can, even before starting their EHR reporting period or obtaining their complete certified EHR system. That way, any PECOS corrections can be completed before the attestation deadline for the payment year. If, during the registration process for the incentive program, the eligible professional does not see the correct entity listed in the "Group Name" drop-down list for reassigning the incentive payment, it may necessary to correct or update the PECOS enrollment record. A provider who is an existing user and needs to update the account information can log into Internet-based [PECOS](#) and select "Account Management" to update the profile information. If you cannot remember your password, contact the PECOS Help Desk at 866-484-8049 (TTY 866-523-4759). The processing time for these changes may be up to 45 days. The provider may also elect to use the paper process to make the change via the 855 application, but this could take up to 60 days to process. Some physicians who have had difficulties with the CMS EHR Incentive Program registration process may be eligible to appeal to receive a payment from a previous period. There is a prescribed process for such appeals.

For step-by-step instructions on the normal registration process, consult the [Registration User Guide](#).

## Challenges/Successes

It may be necessary to verify that the third-party payer has provided correct information to the Medicare program.

## Source

This leading practice document originated from e-mail correspondence that was forwarded to the ONC, which is seeking to disseminate the information. The process described for resolution should work in most cases.

## References/Supporting Documentation

[CMS, Registration User Guide for Eligible Professionals, January 2012](#)