

Modified Stage 2 Objective 9: Secure Electronic Messaging

Objective: Use secure electronic messaging to communicate with patients on relevant health information.

Measure for an EHR reporting period in 2016: At least **one patient** seen by the EP during the reporting period, **a secure message was sent using the electronic messaging function of CEHRT** to the patient (or the patient-authorized representative), or in response to a secure message sent by the patient during the EHR reporting period.

Measure for an EHR reporting period in 2017: More than 5 percent of unique patients seen by the EP during EHR reporting period, a secure message was sent using the electronic messaging function of CEHRT to the patient (or the patient-authorized representative), or in response to a secure message sent by the patient during the EHR reporting period.

Exclusions: Any EP who

- A. Has no office visits during the EHR reporting period, or
- B. Conducts 50 percent or more of his or her patient encounters in a county that does not have 50 percent or more of its housing units with 4Mbps broadband availability according to the latest information available from the FCC on the first day of their EHR reporting period.

[CMS Specification Sheet](#)

TennCare Notes - This objective and measure does not align with anything in Stage 1 Meaningful Use. This measure, like other Stage 2 measures, actively involves patients in using health information technology.

Beginning in 2016, all EPs must attest to this measure to successfully demonstrate meaningful use.

For EPs, secure messaging is critically important to two National Quality Strategy priorities:

Measure at a Glance

Type: calculate percentage

Denominator: Number of unique patients seen by EP during EHR reporting period.

Numerator: Number of patients in the denominator for whom a secure electronic message is sent to the patient or in response to message sent in response to a patient.

- Ensuring that each person/family is engaged as partners in the their care;
- Promoting effective communication and coordination of care

Secure messaging could make care more affordable by using more efficient communication vehicles when appropriate. Specifically, research demonstrates that secure messaging has improved patient adherence to treatment plans, which reduces readmission rates. In addition, secure messaging has led to increased patient satisfaction with their care and is one of the top ranked features according to patients. Despite some trepidation, providers have seen a reduction in time responding to inquiries and time spent on the phone.¹

Relevant CMS FAQs

[10454](#) - (4mbps) Patient access

[12825](#) - Practice with same CEHRT

[9114](#) - Patient interface used

Related Articles

[Ralston JD, Carrell D, Reid R, Anderson M, Moran M, Here ford J \(2007\) "Patient Web Services Integrated with a Shared Medical Record: Patient Use and Satisfaction " Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association 14\(6\):798-806](#)

Gustaf DH, Hawkins, R, Boberg E, Pingree S, Serlin RE, Graziano F, Chan CL (1999) " Impact of a patient-centered, computer-based health information/support system" American Journal of Preventive Medicine 16 (1): 1-9;

[Rosenberg SN, Shnaiden TL, Wegh AA, Juster IA \(2008\) "Supporting the Patient's Role in Guideline Compliance: A Controlled Study" American Journal of Managed Care 14\(11\):737](#)