

WIREC: Region's new extension center offers subsidized technical assistance to help implement EHRs

Starting as early as next year, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will make incentive payments to healthcare providers who demonstrate “meaningful use” of electronic health record systems (EHRs). Providers who meet all the requirements could earn incentives of up to \$44,000 from Medicare or \$63,750 from Medicaid.

The Washington & Idaho Regional Extension Center for Health Information Technology (WIREC)—a new program spearheaded by Qualis Health and several partner organizations across the region— offers technical assistance services to help practices meet the meaningful use criteria and qualify for the incentive payments.

Primary care practices are advised that they may qualify to receive WIREC services at no charge, thanks to Recovery Act funding awarded to WIREC from the US Department of Health and Human Services. **The subsidies are specifically intended to help small practices and those serving safety-net populations adopt EHRs.** Nationwide, clinicians in these types of practices deliver the majority of primary care services, but have the lowest rates of EHR adoption. There is a limited number of slots available to the Recovery Act-funded participants, so act quickly to take advantage of this valuable assistance.

To learn more about the services WIREC provides, and to see if your practice qualifies for the no-charge consulting, please see www.wirecQH.org/apply.cfm or send questions to wirec@qualishealth.org.