

## Quality reporting in MACRA via MIPS

The Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) is one of the options available to physicians under the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA). MIPS is a modified fee-for-service model which consolidates three existing reporting options. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) forecasts that most physicians will participate in MIPS. CMS indicated in the notice of proposed rulemaking that the threshold for bonuses and penalties will be set as the mean or median Composite Performance Score (CPS) achieved by physicians and other eligible providers.

MIPS moves the payment away from many of the "all or nothing" scores of existing programs and offers partial credit. In addition, MIPS provides incentives for high performers. In some respects, bonuses under MIPS may be more attainable than with current programs, although the threshold CPS is currently unknown. MIPS provides clinicians the flexibility to choose the activities and measures that are most meaningful to their practice to demonstrate performance.

### Getting started

Start with where your practice is now.

- Review and assess your performance under the current Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS), Electronic Health Record (EHR) Meaningful Use (MU), and Value-based Payment Modifier (VM) programs. Identify potential areas for improvement. Consider whether partial credit may be achievable if full credit is not.
- Begin to understand your patient panel by review of data housed in your EHR and registry, if you have one, and evaluate resources and care plans to determine how you may improve, particularly related to your most costly and sick patients.

Think about what's next.

- Learn about the core elements that will determine assessment via MIPS.
- Review each of the four MIPS performance categories to ensure you are prepared and ready to comply with the requirements.
- If you aren't already doing so, consider participating in a Qualified Clinical Data Registry (QCDR), which streamlines reporting, offers more frequent feedback and relevant performance information and participation opportunities to your practice while providing information for improving performance scores.
- Utilize the resources that the AMA has developed around MIPS. These resources can be found on the [MIPS Program page](#) of the AMA website.

### Planning ahead

- Set goals and plan for what your practice needs to do to succeed.
- Seek input from physicians in your practice and educate everyone about the upcoming changes. Engage them in developing the practice participation and improvement strategy.
- Stay up to date on the latest information and regulations as MACRA and MIPS continue to evolve.
- Contact your specialty society to see what educational materials and solutions they have available. Many societies offer QCDR reporting that often is more relevant and specific to your specialty and patient population.
- The AMA will help you understand the larger scope of MACRA and MIPS, while also helping you prepare for and reach each milestone.

**Timeline**

CMS issued a proposal outlining plans to begin performance measurement for both MIPS and [Alternative Payment Models](#) (APMs) on January 1, 2017. The AMA has urged CMS to change this date to July 1, 2017 to allow practices ample time to prepare. CMS' final decision will not be known until late 2016 so practices should begin preparing now.

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
								
Performance Period		Payment Year						

**Changes under MIPS that may benefit practices:**

- Redundant quality measurement across separate programs was eliminated.
- Overall there is a reduction in measures; many (but not all) thresholds were eliminated.
- Greater flexibility in measure choice.
- Pass/fail approach was largely eliminated.
- Financial risk from penalties was significantly reduced.
- Many practices are already participating in CMS value programs (PQRS, VM and MU). This participation is good preparation for MIPS.
- Consideration and recognition of effort to report on outcome measures and financial cost through electronic means.

**Additional Resources**

- Access AMA-developed resources on the [MIPS program page](#)
- Find more information on the [CMS Quality Payment Program website](#), including fact sheets and upcoming webinars.

AMA. Practice transformation series: Quality Reporting. 2016.