

Electronic Health Records on the Horizon for Family Health Center

The Family Health Center will begin implementation of their new electronic health record (EHR) on September 13, 2011.

In early 2009, President Obama launched a federal stimulus package which included national healthcare reform initiatives that offer incentive payments to healthcare providers for the purchase of electronic health record systems.

The thought process behind adoption of EHRs is to improve quality of care by meaningfully using an EHR to reduce errors, improve availability of records and data, have the ability to send reminders and alerts, assist with clinical decision support, and e-prescribing/refill automation.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) defines the minimum requirements that providers must meet through their use of certified EHR technology in order to qualify for incentive payments. Aside from incentives for purchase, healthcare providers that fail to meaningfully utilize EHRs by 2015 will be subject to decreases in reimbursement rates.

Kearny County Hospital (KCH) is well on their way to meeting these requirements in order to take advantage of the federal incentive programs.

The adoption of an electronic record system will change the processes that we are all familiar with when we go to see the Doctor. And as a result, we are modifying some of our provider schedules to allow appropriate time for our staff to make this transition a success. Visits with your provider and wait times may be longer as we convert to an electronic record that will enhance coordination of care. After an adjustment period, schedules should return to normal.

Thank you for your patience and understanding!