



MEMBER ALERT

CMS extends the Meaningful Use Reporting

Meaningful-use hardship exemption deadline extended

February 26, 2016

The CMS has extended the deadline for **hospitals, critical-access hospitals (CAHs), physicians and other eligible professionals (EPs)** to file applications for so-called “hardship” exemptions from the **meaningful-use** requirements of the **electronic health records** incentive payment program. The new deadline is **July 1, 2016**,

- The previous deadlines were March 15, 2016 for physicians and other EPs, and April 1, 2016 for hospitals and CAHs.

The extension is being granted so providers have sufficient time to submit their applications to avoid adjustments to their Medicare payments in 2017.

- The CMS released new “streamlined” hardship exception application forms that reduce the amount of information that EPs, eligible hospitals, and CAHs must submit to apply for an exception.
- The new application forms and instructions on filing a hardship exemption are on **the CMS website** at https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/EHRIncentivePrograms/PaymentAdj_Hardship.html

Hardships exemption may be granted for multiple reasons, including unavailability of federally tested and certified software capable of meeting the government's requirements. It can also be granted if providers have problems with Internet connectivity or natural disasters.