

Definition of the “Adopt, Implement, or Upgrade” requirement eligible professionals must meet to receive their initial New Jersey Medicaid EHR Incentive Program payment:

Adopt: To “acquire, purchase, or secure access to certified EHR technology.”

There is evidence that a provider demonstrated actual installation prior to the incentive, rather than “efforts” to install. We stated that this evidence would serve to differentiate between activities that may not result in installation (for example, researching EHRs or interviewing EHR vendors) and actual purchase/acquisition or installation. Acquisition or purchase does not necessarily mean the certified EHR technology is installed and functioning.

Implementation: To “install or commence utilization of certified EHR technology.”

The provider has installed certified EHR technology and has started using the certified EHR technology in his or her clinical practice. Implementation activities would include staff training in the certified EHR technology, the data entry of their patients’ demographic data into the EHR, or establishing data exchange agreements and relationships between the provider’s certified EHR technology and other providers, such as laboratories and pharmacies.

Upgrade: To “expand the available functionality of certified EHR technology.”

The provider has added clinical decision support, e-prescribing functionality, or other enhancements that facilitate the meaningful use of certified EHR technology. An example of upgrading that would qualify for the EHR incentive payment would be upgrading from an existing EHR to a newer version that is certified per the EHR certification criteria promulgated by the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) related to meaningful use. Upgrading may also mean expanding the functionality of an EHR in order to render it certifiable per the ONC EHR certification criteria (<http://onc-chpl.force.com/ehrcert>).