

# Technology & Information

## CMS Launches DOQ-IT U

In April the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) launched the Doctor's Office Quality Information Technology University (DOQ-IT U) to support health information technology (HIT) in physicians' offices. This interactive, Web-based tool is designed to provide solo and small- to medium-sized physician practices with the education for successful HIT adoption, including lessons on culture change, vendor selection, operational redesign, and clinical processes. The nationally available e-learning system is available at no charge.

The first learning modules focus on physician office workflow redesign, culture change, and communication necessary for successful electronic health record (EHR) adoption. Disease specific modules, starting with diabetes, will include a patient self-management component. Future features will include surveys, utilization tracking, and CME offerings. For more information, see: <http://elearning.qualitynet.org>.

## Small Practice Health IT

During a March 2007 meeting of the House Small Business Subcommittee on Regulation, Health Care and Trade, Lynne Kirk, president of the American College of Physicians, argued that financial assistance programs are needed to encourage small physician practices to adopt health information technology (HIT). Only 13% to 16% of solo physician practices are able to adopt HIT because of costs and other factors. Average acquisition costs for HIT systems are \$44,000 per physician with average annual maintenance costs of \$8500. Other witnesses before Congress reported concerns that HIT systems quickly become outdated and may compromise patient privacy.

## Mobile Medical Applications

Epocrates, Inc. introduced the Epocrates Coder mobile application that provides access to more than 20,000 routinely updated ICD-9 and CPT billing codes. Its new mobile dictionary incorporates content from *Stedman's Medical Dictionary* (28<sup>th</sup> edition) into a user-friendly format with more than 100,000 definitions. See: [www.epocrates.com](http://www.epocrates.com).

## Pilot e-Prescribing Success

The e-prescribing pilot project, conducted by CMS and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, demonstrated that 3 initial standards are currently capable of supporting e-prescribing transactions in Medicare Part D. These include transactions that provide physicians with patients' formulary and benefit information, medication history, and fill status of their medications. Other initial standards with potential but still needing further development include standards used to convey structured patient instructions, a terminology to describe clinical drugs, and messages that convey prior authorization information. Five pilot sites operating in 8 states were part of the pilot program.

The report also found that, with some adjustments, e-prescribing can work successfully in long-term care settings.

## QuickTablet Tool Introduced

Optio Healthcare, a developer of electronic health records (EHRs) and forms automation tools, announced a new Tablet PC forms-management module as an optional component of its subscription-based QuickRecord EHR tool suite. The Optio QuickTablet should be available by the end of April and is the firm's first software tool intended for use on the lightweight, keyboard-free tablet PC.

The "ink-on-glass" technology eliminates the cost of preprinted forms by allowing users to write on and sign electronic forms designed with Optio DesignStudio or other forms. See: [www.optiosoftware.com](http://www.optiosoftware.com). MPM