



MEDTRON
SOFTWARE INTELLIGENCE



Q22515 NEWS BLAST



Please Show Your Support For The
MEANINGFUL USE (MU) 'HR 270 - FLEX-IT ACT of 2015'

A group of health care associations including the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME), the American Hospital Association (AHA) and the American Medical Association (AMA) urged the Department of Health and Humana Services (HHS) to shorten the EHR reporting period for 2015 from a twelve (12) months to a three (3) month reporting period "to ensure that hospitals and physicians continue moving forward with technology to improve patient care".

Representatives Renee Ellmers (R-NC) and James Matheson (D-UT), introduced the Flexibility in Health IT Reporting Act (H.R. 270), known as the Flex-IT Act in 2014. This legislation would require the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to shorten the MU 2015 reporting period to 90 days as opposed to a full year, as is currently required.

The HHS final rule released in September 2014:

- Gave providers until 2015 to attest to MU Stage 2
- Delayed the start date for MU Stage 3 from January 1, 2016, to January 1, 2017
- Allowed providers to attest to MU Stage 1 under the 2013 reporting year definition and use the clinical quality measures (CQM) from 2013
- Allowed providers to avoid penalties for failing to move to MU Stage 2 during the 2014 reporting period
- Allowed provider to use the 2011 Edition certified EHR technology or a combination of 2011 and 2014 Edition certified EHR technology for the 2014 EHR reporting period.

However, in the final rule CMS declined to allow a 90-day reporting period during any quarter for MU Stage 2 in 2015, despite strong recommendations from many health organizations that a three-month quarterly reporting period was warranted. Instead, the final rule maintained a twelve-month reporting period for MU Stage 2 in 2015.

A congressional effort to shorten the MU attestation period from a one year (365 days) reporting period to a three-month (90 days) quarterly reporting period in 2015 has been re-energized. On Monday, January 12, 2015 Representatives Renee Ellmers (R-NC) and Ron Kind (D-WI) introduced bill HR 270 - The Flexibility in Health IT Reporting (Flex-IT) Act of 2015 (similar to legislation introduced at the end of the previous 113th Congress) which would shorten the MU attestation period in 2015 from a one year (365 days) reporting period to a three-month quarterly reporting period (90 days). In addition to Ellmers and Kind, the bill's original co-sponsors also included Representatives Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Glenn Thompson (R-PA), and David Scott (D-GA).

2015 has brought many new compliance requirements to EHR with MU Stage 2, reducing the provider reporting requirement to only a three-month quarterly reporting period (90 days) as the MU attestation period in 2015 would provide practices more time to adopt the new requirements.

TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT -- TAKE ACTION NOW by going to the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) Government Affairs Advocacy Center website to send a message to your legislator urging them to support the HR 270 Flex-IT Act and other issues too!
<http://www.congressweb.com/mgma>.

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