

## Bonus Payment to Increase for CMS Reporting Program

Physicians who report quality measures in 2009 through the Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS) Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI) will be eligible for an increased bonus payment.

The 1.5-percent bonus from 2007 and 2008 will become a 2-percent bonus for 2009.

“Congress and CMS have demonstrated a committed interest in projects which tie reimbursement for services rendered with performance measures,” said James C. Stevens, MD, FAAN, chair of the AAN Pay-for-Performance Work Group. “Although no specific dates have been set, many feel the voluntary reporting program will become mandatory for all Medicare and Medicaid providers in the future. It is the responsibility of the AAN to prepare our members for such eventualities.”



James C. Stevens, MD, FAAN

The quality measures used in 2008 again will be available for reporting next year. In addition, CMS is proposing new measures for 2009. The 2009 measures must be finalized and published by November 15, 2008. The new proposed measures relevant to neurology include several measures on back pain and endarterectomy, two measures on falls, and measures on lipid screening and brief counseling for unhealthy alcohol use.

To qualify for the bonus, participants need to report on at least three applicable measures 80 percent of the time on eligible patients.

For the 2007 PQRI program, approximately 57,000 providers earned the incentive payment, which totaled \$36 million dollars.

For more information, visit [www.aan.com/p4p](http://www.aan.com/p4p) or contact Gina Gjordvad at [ggjordvad@aan.com](mailto:ggjordvad@aan.com) or (651) 695-2715.

### BONUS PAYMENT OFFERED FOR ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING

In 2009, providers who use a qualified program and are successful in electronically prescribing medications are eligible for a 2-percent bonus payment of covered Medicare Part B charges.

The e-prescribing bonus is not tied to the CMS Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI), although the electronic prescribing program must meet the criteria listed in PQRI measure #125 (visit [www.aan.com/globals/axon/assets/3424.pdf](http://www.aan.com/globals/axon/assets/3424.pdf) for more information). Among the criteria, the program must be able to provide information on lower cost alternatives, provide information on formulary or tiered formulary medications and authorization requirements from the patient's drug plan, and conduct safety checks, including drug-to-drug interactions, allergy concerns, and warnings or cautions.

Successful reporting is defined as reporting on the measure for at least 50 percent of eligible patients.

The 2-percent payment will be in effect for 2009 and 2010. Then the bonus will step down to 1 percent in 2011 and 2012 and .5 percent in 2013. Providers who are not successfully using electronic prescribing by 2012 will be penalized 1 percent of their covered Medicare Part B charges, with penalties increasing in later years.

For more information, contact Gina Gjordvad at [ggjordvad@aan.com](mailto:ggjordvad@aan.com) or (651) 695-2715.

## OTHER NEWS

### Apply Now for Neuro-Oncology Certification Examination

Applications for the United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties (UCNS) certification examination in Neuro-Oncology are available for download beginning the first week of October. They can be downloaded from the UCNS website at [www.ucns.org/certification](http://www.ucns.org/certification). The deadline to apply for the examination and submit supporting documentation and payment is January 15, 2009. For more information, contact Todd Bulson at [tbulson@ucns.org](mailto:tbulson@ucns.org) or (651) 695-2813.

UNITED COUNCIL  
FOR  
NEUROLOGIC  
SUBSPECIALTIES