OIG NEWS

OIG ISSUES REPORT ON STATE MEDICAID AGENCIES' INITIATIVES ON HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE

State Medicaid Agencies are Making Progress

Washington, DC – In a report released today, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) found that State Medicaid agencies are making progress in implementing health information technology (HIT) and health information exchange (HIE) initiatives, both of which have been priorities for HHS. HIT and HIE initiatives have the potential to reduce health care costs resulting from inefficiency, medical errors, inappropriate care, and incomplete information.

"Supporting the Department's efforts in moving toward a fully interoperable electronic health records system that maintains information security is a priority of our office," said Inspector General Daniel R. Levinson. "We are committed to working closely with our many stakeholders to ensure prudent implementation of HIT in a manner that detects and prevents fraud, waste, and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs."

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Twelve State Medicaid agencies have already implemented a variety of HIT initiatives including claims-based electronic health records, electronic prescribing, remote disease monitoring and personal health records initiatives. Many State Medicaid agencies are in the process of developing similar HIT initiatives.

Twenty-five State Medicaid agencies are involved in planning and developing statewide HIE networks that will allow for secure exchange of health care information. The goal of these networks is to develop a statewide infrastructure to support the widespread use of HIT and allow health care providers and payers in the State to securely exchange clinical information. Additionally, 13 State Medicaid agencies include Medicaid Information Technology Architecture (MITA) as part of their HIT and HIE planning. MITA is a framework developed by CMS to help States modernize their Medicaid information systems.

These findings are based on a survey of all State Medicaid directors and structured telephone interviews with State Medicaid directors who reported that they have current or planned HIT and HIE initiatives. In addition, OIG reviewed documentation of State HIT and HIE initiatives and interviewed officials from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

OIG recommended that CMS continue to support the goals of MITA, collaborate with other Federal agencies and offices to assist State Medicaid agencies in developing privacy and security policies, and continue to work with the Office of the National Coordinator for HIT to ensure that State Medicaid initiatives are consistent with national goals.

For a copy of the full report:
http://www.oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/oei-02-06-00270.pdf

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