EHR Association Position Statement
EHR User Fee as Proposed in President Obama’s FY 14 Budget

The EHR Association does not support the user fee for electronic health records (EHR) included in the President’s proposed 2014 budget. EHR developers are already devoting extensive resources to successful implementation of the EHR Meaningful Use Incentive Program and other healthcare delivery reform efforts, including the significant fees associated with EHR product certification. Adding costs to the healthcare system at a time when providers already feel significant effects from several new legislative and regulatory programs, including payment cuts, is not an approach consistent with the government’s larger goals of fostering broad health information technology adoption to support healthcare delivery system reform.

Rather than the proposed user fee approach, we suggest that the Department of Health and Human Services evaluates whether all requirements in the meaningful use program and the associated certification activities are valuable and consistent with available federal and industry resources, and then streamline where appropriate. This is especially important as the industry considers the scope and depth of meaningful use Stage 3 as balanced against the infrastructure and tactical work that would be required for successful deployment.

At the same time, we encourage Members of Congress to ensure that they are appropriating sufficient funds to the Office of the National Coordinator to enable execution of the critical programs they have been asked to roll out. The adoption of standards-based, interoperable health information technology benefits many stakeholders, including providers, payers and most importantly, patients and their families.