

The Quick CMS-Approved Way to Avoid a MACRA Penalty

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Know the Consequences of Your Reporting Choices

The Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (**MACRA**) involves a shift to value-based payment models. The new related Quality Payment Program (**QPP**) has two tracks:

- ◆ Advanced Alternative Payment Models (**APMs**)
- ◆ Merit-based Incentive Payment System (**MIPS**)

The expectation is that most physicians will start in MIPS, which includes elements of the Physician Quality Reporting System (**PQRS**), the Value-Based Modifier (**VM or VBM**), and the Medicare Electronic Health Record incentive program (also called Meaningful Use).

CMS is offering a “Pick Your Pace” approach to MIPS. If MIPS is the program for you, the option you choose to follow in 2017 will determine the impact on your Medicare payments in 2019.

- ◆ **Don’t participate:** If you don’t submit any 2017 data, expect a negative payment adjustment.
- ◆ **Submit something/test:** This choice is your quick road to avoiding a penalty. You must submit some data, such as one quality measure, to avoid a downward payment adjustment. This option helps ensure that your system is working and that you’re ready to participate at a higher level in 2018 and beyond.
- ◆ **Submit a partial year:** Submitting 90 days of 2017 data to Medicare will also keep you safe from a penalty and may even bring you a positive payment adjustment. This option means you can begin after Jan. 1, 2017, if you need more time to prepare.
- ◆ **Submit a full year:** Submitting a full year of QPP data is your best chance for a bonus.

Add to Your Reimbursement by Getting to Know MACRA

The following are some resources available to aid you:

- ◆ **CMS:** From CMS’s MACRA: MIPS & APMs site, you can access a QPP site. Don’t miss the Education page, which includes resources like a Where to Go for Help Fact Sheet.
- ◆ **AMA:** The AMA has a MACRA site that includes an assessment tool.
- ◆ **AAPC:** AAPC offers a MACRA category in its Knowledge Center with informative articles and helpful updates.