

Meaningful Use Stages:

Meaningful Use is structured in 3 stages, each of which builds upon and advances the prior stage to a higher level. All providers are currently in stage 1—meaningful use Stage 2 requirements do not become effective for any provider until at least 2014. Physicians earn their first two incentive payments by attesting to meaningful use according to the requirements defined for [Stage 1](#). The only exception is for those physicians whose first payment year was 2011—they will report under Stage 1 for three years.

The [Final Rule for Meaningful Use Stage 2](#) was released on August 23, 2012 following a 60-day public comment period in response to the proposed rule for Stage 2. SRS submitted a [detailed response regarding the meaningful use rule](#) on behalf of its physicians. (You can also read [SRS' comments on the ONC's proposed 2014 certification rule](#).)

Stage 2 is characterized by the following:

Emphasis of Stage 2 is on:

- Increased interoperability and exchange of data between providers and with patients
- Increased patient engagement in care

Reporting Period for 2014:

- All Providers will report for 90-days rather than a full year as originally required, (calendar quarter for Medicare, any 90 days for Medicaid).

Stage 2 Meaningful Use is structured similarly to Stage 1:

- [Core and Menu Measures](#): Providers must report (meet or exclude) all 17 core measures and must meet 3 of 6 menu measures
- Providers also report on 9 Clinical Quality Measures selected from a set of 64
- Exclusions are available for some core measures that may not be relevant to particular specialties or practice types

Stage 2 Raises the Bar:

- Most measures have higher thresholds and/or more complex requirements
- Some measures are now combined
- All but one of the 10 Stage 1 menu measures become core (required) measures
- Exclusions no longer count for menu measures (i.e., providers must report on menu measures which they can meet)
- There are 6 new measures (1 core and 5 menu)
- Measures related to exchange of data require actual sharing of real data (i.e., test exchanges and use of fictional data are not sufficient)
- Patients must actually access their information online (it is not sufficient that the information is available online)

The proposed rule for Meaningful Use Stage 2 also includes some changes to Stage 1 that would become effective in 2013 (prior to Stage 2). The most important one for specialists is the ability to split vital signs and report documentation of height and weight while attesting to an exclusion for blood pressure (or vice-versa).

