CCHIT Releases First List of Certified EHRs

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The Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology has unveiled its first list of 20 ambulatory electronic health record products that meet its standards for functionality, interoperability, and security.

CCHIT was formed in 2004 by three leading health IT management and technology industry associations. It is under contract to the federal government to develop certification criteria for EHRs and evaluate products. In this first round, CCHIT officials gave their seal of approval to 18 products that met all certification standards. Two additional products were given conditional premarket certification pending verification by users.

The certified products are designed to serve the spectrum of physician practices, Dr. Mark Leavitt, CCHIT chair, said during a press conference. Vendors whose products were certified received a CCHIT seal of approval that the product met 2006 standards, Dr. Leavitt said. That certification is good for up to 3 years or vendors can come back to CCHIT each year to be certified under the updated standards, he said.

This year's standards included some baseline interoperability functionality related to receiving lab results, but the bulk of the interoperability requirements will be applied starting next year, once standards have been harmonized, he said.

At the press conference, Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt announced HHS soon will publish a final rule creating safe harbors in federal antikickback statute and physician self-referral laws that would allow hospital systems and other large provider groups to donate health IT products to physicians in certain cases. The proposed rule was issued in October. ■

The list of certified products is available at www.cchit.org.