Meaningful Use Stage Three Request for Comments: Comments are due to the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC) by January 14, 2013 (Monday!) and must be submitted electronically at http://www.regulations.gov. The Health Information Technology Policy Committee (HITPC) released a preliminary set of recommendations for MU Stage 3 and is requesting public feedback. Note, these are only preliminary recommendations and HHS is not obligated to use them in future rules and regulations, but may provide an early indication of Stage 3 MU objectives.

KHA’s comments will be brief focusing on the need to consider experience with Meaningful Use Stages 1 and 2 before proposing Stage 3 – reality check...fewer than one-third of hospitals nationally have attested to stage 1.

CMS Quality Reporting through Electronic Health Records: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is accepting comments through Jan. 22 on hospital readiness to electronically report certain patient-level data under the inpatient quality reporting program beginning with calendar year 2014 discharges. In the Request for Information, CMS seeks comments on EHR Incentive Program alignment and support for other quality reporting programs, plans by hospitals to participate in electronic reporting, and resources that may be used to support electronic reporting. The main points of comments submitted by the Kansas Hospital Association will be: the importance of alignment with existing quality initiatives, that CMS requirements for EHR vendors be aligned with ONC, to require vendor certification on all quality measures and to underscore that, at this point, EHRs are not capable of reporting accurate results or accumulating the necessary data. Comments may be submitted electronically at www.regulations.gov or by mail. PLEASE share your thoughts with KHA at sperkins@kha-net.org.

ONC HIMSS Survey of CAHs: The Kansas Office of Rural Health has asked us to distribute information about a survey of Critical Access Hospitals being conducted by HIMSS for ONC. It is a brief 16 question survey with a deadline by the end of March 2013. While some questions seem duplicative, others are specific to access to capital, workforce and broadband speed and costs. Results will primarily be used at the national level for enhanced outreach, to better understand the needs of critical access hospitals, and to assess the effectiveness of current health IT programs and grants. The link to the survey is: http://surveys.himss.org/checkbox/Survey.aspx?s=5e9701cd27bc4158abb6b679a720595b
When you complete the survey you get a prize! You will receive a document referencing Federal broadband funding opportunities designed specifically to fund projects that improve health and development in rural areas by increasing access to internet technologies. If you have any questions, please contact Patti Harris, Senior Director, Data Collection and Quality at patti.harris@himssanalytics.org.

**KHIE:** A quick note about changes to the KHIE Board. They will now be meeting quarterly. Their first meeting is Wednesday, February 13, 2013. Meetings are held at the KMS office and begin at 11:30am. The KHIE Board of Directors recently approved the [2013 operating budget](#) for KHIE, Inc. effective January 1, 2013. In September, the KHIE Board of Directors approved the transfer of KHIE responsibilities and functions to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) effective no later than October 1, 2013, provided that the Kansas Legislature amends the KHITE legislation to assign current KHIE responsibilities to KDHE. Given that a transition plan has yet to be determined, the 2013 operating budget was prepared for the entire calendar year.

**Office of Civil Rights Information:** At the recent ONC Annual Meeting, Mary and I had an opportunity to hear a [presentation](#) by the Office of Civil Rights, the agency responsible for enforcing the HITECH privacy and security rules. The presentation has some great information in it that we thought you might like to see.

**Communities of Practice Webinars:** Dates have been set for the 2013 Communities of Practice Webinars: March 14, June 20, Sept. 5 and Dec. 12. These Webinars will be one hour educational briefings over the lunch hour on various hot topics and/or regulatory issues related to health information technology. Brief presentations will be made by KHA staff or subject matter experts depending on the topic. There will be a time for open discussion and/or questions and answers. Specific topics will be announced closer to each program.

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