

Alternative Specialist Funding Program Overview

- The Government and the BCMA established PITO under the 2007 Physician Master Agreement with a primary purpose of promoting “the use by all physicians in British Columbia of an EMR as their principle method of record keeping for the patient/clinical record.”
- PITO has determined the need for a funding program that recognizes the variation in requirements between different practice types (e.g. surgeons, medical consultants, paediatricians, psychiatrists, ophthalmologists) and patient care settings (e.g. private office, hospital-based ambulatory clinics).
- The Alternative Specialist Funding Program (ASFP) focuses on enabling clinical goals rather than reimbursement of direct expenditures for EMR implementation. It offsets the physicians’ costs through funding for specialists adopting solutions that support increasing clinical goals under the following broad principles:
 - Funding will escalate in tiers based on enabling incremental clinical goals, measured through “Meaningful Use Criteria” that are tied to positive health system impact
 - Specialists may select the EMR and associated technology of their choice, and will assume the related responsibilities for ensuring required functionality, service levels, pricing, licensing arrangements, privacy and security, interoperability, Health Canada Device licensing, etc.
 - There will be no procurement process or contractual arrangement between the Province or PITO and vendors for the provision of such systems – the relationship is strictly between the physician and their vendor
 - Privacy and security best practices remain a cornerstone of the program, with more responsibility directly with the physician in choosing and maintaining their EMR
- Physicians will sign a Declaration of Meaningful Use to certify that they are using an EMR solution that enables the clinical goals associated with a particular level of Meaningful Use. In addition, physicians will participate in a demonstration of their use of the EMR as part of a Post-Implementation Review meeting.
- Funding will be effective from the date of Declaration. For physicians who apply prior to December 31st, 2010, funding can be retroactive as far back as April 1st, 2010 if they have achieved one of the levels of Meaningful Use at that time.
- Through the PITO Program, specialist physicians may choose to participate in either the existing “Complete EMR Offering” program or the ASFP. If a specialist physician chooses to switch between funding programs, the physician will be eligible for funding under the program they change to, but the funding level will not exceed what would have been received under either individual program.
- All EMRs must be provided through an ASP model pursuant to the Physician Master Agreement. The Private Physicians Network (PPN) is currently not available to physicians applying to the ASFP.
- The ASFP is available to physicians certified in one of the specialties recognized by the Royal College, or GPs under certain circumstances providing specialized care.
- Physicians can apply for PITO support at www.pito.bc.ca, upon which a Local Relationship Manager working in the physician’s community will contact them to discuss the next steps.

For more information and related documentation, visit:

<http://www.pito.bc.ca/cms/programs/specialists>