



[Senate Finance Committee Releases Policy Option Paper](#)

The Senate Finance Committee released a policy paper today entitled "Transforming the Health Care Delivery System: Proposals to Improve Patient Care and Reduce Health Care Costs." The paper includes policy options for reducing costs and improving care. Senate Finance Committee members will "walk-through" the options in a meeting on Wednesday. Two other option papers will be released before a Chairman's Mark on health reform is developed. The paper includes a proposed option specifically related to HIT. This option reads:

"The Committee is exploring the possibility of expanding eligibility for the EHR Medicare incentive payments to include nurse practitioners and physician assistants under certain conditions, such as those who practice in settings outside of a physician office. Eligible providers would receive the same EHR incentive payments as physicians.

In addition, the Committee intends to further explore providing additional health IT incentives to other health care providers, such as those offering post-acute services, that were not included in the Medicare and Medicaid incentives included in ARRA. In particular, the Committee is analyzing whether additional health IT incentives within Medicare are warranted to help support the care coordination and quality improvement goals and activities related to various proposals included in this document, such as the establishment of value-based purchasing programs, chronic care management models and proposals to bundle acute and post-acute payments. The Committee looks forward to receiving additional input on this topic."

The press release for this paper may be found at the following web address:

<http://finance.senate.gov/press/Bpress/2009press/prb042809.pdf>

The full policy paper may be found at the following web address:

<http://finance.senate.gov/sitepages/leg/LEG%202009/042809%20Health%20Care%20Description%20of%20Policy%20Option.pdf>.