

[HHS Publishes Draft Description of Regional Extension Center Program](#)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act ("ARRA") directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services ("HHS"), working through the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, to establish an HIT extension program that will provide HIT assistance services through the Department of HHS. Today, HHS published its draft description of the program in the Federal Register.

HHS proposes the following goals for the regional extension center program: (i) to encourage adoption of electronic health records ("EHRs"); (ii) to assist physicians and hospitals in becoming "meaningful users" of EHRs, and; (iii) to increase the probability that physicians and hospitals adopting EHRs will become "meaningful users."

The draft description proposes to provide funding for two-year awards, which will be made as early as the first quarter of FY 2010. The average award value per center will range from \$1 to \$2 million. The maximum award value to any one center will not exceed \$10 million.

Public comments on the draft description are due by June 11, 2009. The full draft description may be found at the following web address: <http://frwebgate1.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/TEXTgate.cgi?WAISdocID=537019382762+9+1+0&WAIAction=retrieve>.