

# Maryland's Episode Quality Improvement Program (EQIP)

## What is EQIP?

- EQIP is a **voluntary program** that will provide **incentive payments to physicians** specializing in gastroenterology, orthopedics, and cardiology who **improve the quality of care and reduce the cost of care** that they provide to Maryland Medicare patients.
- EQIP tests an approach that **ties healthcare payments to the quality and cost of services provided under a clinical 'episode'** for a set period. This includes relevant set of services delivered to a related to a medical condition, procedure or health care event during a defined time period.

## What is my Role?



"Care Partner"  
(A specialty physician)

- Triggers episodes and performs EQIP care interventions
- Signs a **Care Partner Arrangement** (contract)
- Receives normal fee-schedule payments from Medicare and a **potential "Incentive Payment" with the EQIP Entity**
- Eligible to achieve **Quality Payment Program Status** and bonuses



"EQIP Entity"  
(1+ Care Partners)

- Conducts **performance evaluation**
- Can be any **grouping of Care Partners** who agree to work together in EQIP
- Receives **Incentive Payments**



Maryland Health  
Services Cost  
Review  
Commission

- Calculates episodes, monitors performance and **determines Incentive Payments**
- Maintains reporting and monitoring requirements with CMS
- Facilitates **EQIP Entity and Care Partner Enrollment, Reporting and Learning Systems**
- Assists with contracting and Incentive Payment through the **University of Maryland Medical Center** (physician affiliation is not required for participation in EQIP)

## Benefits for Maryland Physicians

**Physician ownership of performance**

*Policy tailored to independent and employ physician practice*

**Upside-only risk with dissavings accountability**

*EQIP will provide a lump-sum bonus to normal Medicare Payment*

**Alignment with CareFirst's episode program**

*Can apply to both Medicare and Commercially insured patients*

**Advanced Alternative Payment Model Participation Opportunity**

*MIPS reporting Exemption  
5% Bonus from Medicare payment*

## How Do I Participate?



Qualify as a Care Partner with CMS

- Must be licensed and enrolled in the **Medicare Provider Enrollment, Chain, and Ownership System (PECOS)**
- Must use **CEHRT and CRISP**, Maryland's health information exchange

- Establish **EQIP Entity** with **multiple Care Partners**
- Select Episodes and Interventions** and agree to quality metrics\*
- Sign a **Care Partner Arrangement**
- Determine **Payment Remission Recipient\***



Enroll in EQIP



Meet Episode Thresholds

- Provide care in **Maryland**
- For a **single episode, threshold** = 11 episodes in the baseline
- Across **all episodes of participation**, threshold = 50 episodes in the baseline

## What Episodes Can I Select as an EQIP Entity?

- EQIP will utilize the **Prometheus Episode Grouper** approach.
- The **first performance year** will include episodes in the following specialty areas:

### Cardiology

Pacemaker / Defibrillator  
Acute Myocardial Infarction  
CABG &/or Valve Procedures  
Coronary Angioplasty

### Gastroenterology

Colonoscopy  
Colorectal Resection  
Gall Bladder Surgery  
Upper GI Endoscopy

### Orthopedics

Hip Replacement & Hip Revision  
Hip/Pelvic Fracture  
Knee Arthroscopy  
Knee Replacement & Knee Revision  
Lumbar Laminectomy  
Lumbar Spine Fusion  
Shoulder Replacement



# Enrollment Opens July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021



Enrollment opportunity will close September 1, 2021

Performance will start January 1, 2022 and run through December 31, 2023

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT [EQIP@CRISPHEALTH.ORG](mailto:EQIP@CRISPHEALTH.ORG)  
or VISIT THE HSCRC WEBSITE: <https://hscrc.maryland.gov/Pages/Episode-Quality-Improvement-Program.aspx>