

MEDHOST Goes to Washington

Once the final Meaningful Use criteria were released, MEDHOST worked to achieve a prompt certification because we knew it was crucial for our Customers seeking ARRA funds. Little did we know, addressing our Customers' needs would qualify MEDHOST as an "early adopter," and ultimately result in an invitation to go to Washington D.C. and share our experiences with the Implementation Work Group Health Information Technology Standards Committee, a subcommittee of the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology.

On January 10, MEDHOST joined a panel populated with industry leaders, including representatives from the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) and the Certification Commission for Health Information Technology (CCHIT), to present testimony on our real-world experiences working with Meaningful Use and the NIST certification criteria. More importantly, this was an opportunity to voice the challenges that still surround Meaningful Use, as well as provide recommendations and strategies to accelerate the industry's adoption of the criteria.

It's no secret that MEDHOST has always been a strong believer in creating solutions that complement the end-user's workflow rather than hinder it. After all, how can a hospital and its patients benefit from technology if clinicians choose to not adopt it because it impedes their workflow? During our certification process, we were surprised by the lack of emphasis and procedures when it came to testing the impact on clinician workflow. We stressed this observation during our testimony, and we recommended more scenario-based testing to truly emulate the natural use of the application. This would illustrate how convenient or inconvenient it is for a clinician to utilize the technology, preventing the certification of systems that have plenty of applications and features but not functional in real-world clinical environments. We believe that evaluating the impact on workflow during the testing process would ensure higher levels of clinician compliance, help hospitals achieve Meaningful Use and ultimately lead to better quality and safer patient care.

Although the industry has come a long way, the path to achieving Meaningful Use still has a few hurdles for vendors and providers alike. At MEDHOST, we remain focused on usability and clinician workflows, so we can continue providing innovative tools that support our Customers' Meaningful Use initiatives and more.

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