

May 17, 2018

Dear EMR Users,

Since 2005, DHW has valued our collaboration with you as you have adopted Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) in your practice. Recent EMR market changes have affected many EMR users. We want to give you information to help you prepare for these changes, and ensure the integrity of the electronic medical record for patient care and patient safety.

The Nova Scotia government recently announced an \$8.5 million investment program to financially support doctors using electronic medical records. The funding includes:

- 1) One-time payment for those doctors changing EMR Products;
- 2) One-time incentive to expedite the required migration from Nightingale On Demand EMR to one of 2 Certified EMRs (TELUS Health's *Med Access* EMR or QHR Technologies' *Accuro* EMR); and
- 3) Financial support for EMR users on existing provincial EMRs other than Nightingale on Demand (EMR Subsidy).

As you know, TELUS Health acquired the assets of Nightingale Informatix Corporation in September 2016. DHW will continue to operate the Nightingale On Demand EMR with support from TELUS Health until December 31, 2019. The province has been actively working on a migration plan with physicians who expressed interest in an early migration to either Med Access or Accuro. A pilot has been underway since December 2017 and both vendors have successfully migrated clinics using the provincial migration standards and processes. At the same time, the vendors are undergoing EMR Certification with DHW to ensure their EMR product meets provincial standards for delivery of patient care and to support the strategic and operational objectives of Nova Scotia and end users.

**We are now able to share the details of the migration plan, including funding to support those requiring migration services. If you are affected by the changes, it is now time to start planning your EMR migration.**

**For family physicians working in collaborative family practice teams:**

Those physicians working in teams that are operated by NSHA in NSHA locations, please connect with your Primary Health Care Health Services Manager as your first point of contact to discuss the plan for your team.

Those physicians that are operating in a co-leadership model with NSHA, please reach out to your Primary Health Care co-lead if you are interested in learning more about your options in partnering with NSHA; there are a number of options to consider and the PHC team will assist in reviewing these with you.

**For all other physicians and care teams** the vendor is your first point of contact and will be responsible for leading your clinic migration project from start to end. If you require migration services, we urge you to:

- contact QHR and TELUS Health now to request a demo as soon as possible,
- select the EMR solution that best supports your practice,
- sign a contract with your preferred vendor, and

- submit your 'Consent to Grant Access' form through your vendor to the DHW Migration Project Office so your migration date can be confirmed.

### EMR Migration Options

You have a choice between Med Access and Accuro as your new EMR. Both are integrated with the provincial information systems including MyHealthNS, both receive eResults, and both will provide monthly updates of immunizations to the Public Health information system. To facilitate migration activities with your practice, DHW is working with TELUS Health and QHR to ensure that robust migration standards are met so you have access to all data in your new EMR.

As you select your new EMR and plan your migration, you will transition to a direct support relationship with your preferred vendor.

### EMR Migration Incentive Program

Physicians who participate in the provincial migration program may qualify for one or both migration incentives:

- ***One-time migration incentive payment for those doctors changing EMR products.*** A migration incentive of \$2,300 will be paid to each physician in recognition for time spent by them and their staff to ensure migration of patient records is completed in accordance with provincial migration project standards, including testing and validating migrated data. Eligibility criteria are included in the attached FAQ.
- ***One-time incentive payment to expedite the required migration from Nightingale On Demand (NOD).*** Eligible physicians currently on Nightingale on Demand may also receive up to a maximum of \$3,000 (one-time only payment) to compensate them for migrating their patient records from Nightingale On Demand to a Certified EMR. Incentive amounts will be determined as follows:
  - Physicians who, between December 1, 2017 and October 31, 2018, secure a migration date with the vendor and DHW and submit their Consent to Grant Access Form to DHW, shall receive the maximum amount of the NOD Migration Incentive (\$3,000). (Note that the migration date may be after October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, but it must be ***secured*** by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018)
  - Physicians who, between November 1, 2018 and March 31, 2019, secure a migration date with the vendor and DHW and submit their Consent to Grant Access Form to DHW, shall receive 75% of the maximum NOD Incentive (actual \$2,250). (Note that the migration date may be after March 31, 2019, but it must be ***secured*** by March 31, 2019.)
  - Physicians who, between April 1, 2019 and October 31, 2019, secure a migration date with the vendor and DHW and submit their Consent to Grant Access Form to DHW, shall receive 50% of the maximum NOD Incentive (actual \$1,500) (Note that the migration date may be after October 31, 2019, but it must be ***secured*** by October 31, 2019.)

- Once a migration date is secured, it is expected that the physician will complete the migration as scheduled. If the scheduled migration date is changed by the DHW Migration Project Office, this will not negatively affect the amount of the incentive to be paid to the physician. If the scheduled migration date is changed by the physician, the new migration secured date will be used to determine eligibility for incentive payments.

To qualify for compensation under the EMR Migration Incentive Program (Incentives 1 and 2) physicians are required to meet specific migration eligibility criteria which include:

- Selection of your EMR product (MedAccess or Accuro) and having your vendor schedule/secure your clinic migration date with the DHW Migration Project Office;
- Completion of the necessary consent and access documentation requirements (Consent to Grant Access Form); and
- Compliance with and participation in the migration process, including data validation, and completion of an evaluation survey.

DHW has established a team of internal and external resources (DHW Migration Project Office) who are responsible for the oversight and accountability of all migrations to EMRs currently undergoing certification (Med Access and Accuro). All payments will be processed by the DHW Migration Project Office and paid through MSI on a quarterly basis. Physicians do not need to submit claims to receive payment for these incentives.

We recommend you select your new EMR product and schedule your migration soon to ensure you maximize the migration funding options. We expect the pace of migrations to increase significantly over the coming months. More detailed information and a migration guide will be provided soon.

### **EMR Subsidy**

To encourage ongoing EMR use, *existing* provincial EMR users (i.e. Practimax, Accuro and Med Access), who are receiving eResults from provincial information systems, will receive an EMR subsidy of \$200 per month.

Nightingale On Demand physicians will qualify for the subsidy in the month after they have completed their migration to a Certified EMR.

For Accuro, Practimax and Med Access EMR users who meet the eligibility criteria (see FAQ), the subsidy is effective April 1, 2018.

The end date for the EMR Subsidy is December 31, 2019 or earlier if a new Physician Master Agreement has been ratified. All payments will be processed by DHW and paid through MSI on a quarterly basis. No action is required by physicians.

### **Virtual Care Pilot (MyHealthNS)**

The new \$4.2M Virtual Care Pilot is designed for family doctors interested in providing some patient care using secure e-message and telephone. Participating family doctors can receive up to \$12,000 this year for using MyHealthNS to communicate with their patients. To access this fund, physicians must be registered MyHealthNS users and actively invite their patients to register.

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A working group, chaired by Dr. Stewart Cameron and with Doctors Nova Scotia representation, is working on designing the MyHealthNS Virtual Care Pilot rollout. An evaluation of this pilot will look at the benefits and impacts of using the secure e-messaging function and telephone to improve access to primary health care. Additional details will be provided very soon. Contact us now for more information on MyHealthNS or to request a demo. You can reach us at 902-424-3951 or email [MyHealthNS@novascotia.ca](mailto:MyHealthNS@novascotia.ca).

**If you have funding related questions with either the EMR Investment Program or the new MyHealthNS Virtual Care Pilot, please email us at: [dhwtechincentives@novascotia.ca](mailto:dhwtechincentives@novascotia.ca)**

Regards,



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cc: DoctorsNS, NSCFP, NSHA, IWK, TELUS Health, QHR Technologies, Medavie , CPSNS

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) May 17, 2018

### **Why is DHW planning a provincial migration project?**

TELUS Health will continue to support Nightingale On Demand EMR until December 31, 2019 in order to provide time to migrate to a Certified EMR. Physicians on other EMRs are also assessing their EMR needs and may choose to move to a Certified EMR. The Province wants to support physicians requiring migration services and it wants to ensure the EMR meets provincial standards needed to support delivery of quality patient care. The migration project establishes the importance of migration standards and robust, repeatable processes to ensure patient data is available and protected. Having a provincial migration project will provide support for physicians while providing appropriate oversight of the migration process protecting the integrity of the medical record for patient care and patient safety.

### **What is the role of the EMR vendor in migration?**

The province is working with existing vendors in the province that currently receive eResults and that are undergoing EMR Certification. Both Med Access (TELUS Health) and Accuro (QHR Technologies) have been working towards certification. These EMR vendors are the first point of contact for most physicians migrating and they are responsible for leading the clinic migration project from start to finish by actively engaging physicians, other providers (i.e. Nurse Practitioners), and other medical and administrative office staff using the established provincial migration standards and processes. *For NSHA collaborative family practice teams, your first point of contact is your Primary Health Care Health Services Manager.*

### **What is the role of the physician?**

Physicians will be supported by their EMR vendor throughout the migration process. To ensure a successful data migration, there is a minimum set of activities that should be completed.

1. Complete a needs assessment with the EMR vendor to inform your migration. Your vendor will assess your EMR needs and identify the EMR data and functionality that you currently use.
2. Develop a migration plan based on your needs assessment. You will work with your EMR vendor to develop a migration testing, validation and training plan. The plan will include a minimum of two data validation cycles and will help identify any issues or missing data prior to using your new EMR.
3. All physicians and nurse practitioners have a professional obligation to ensure that migrated data for their patients is complete and accurate. Physicians are responsible for identifying the clinical and practice staff required to participate in the migration planning and validation.
4. Validate your data. It is critical that you and your staff schedule time to validate the data immediately after each test extract and immediately after the full data migration.
5. Determining the "right" number of charts to validate is difficult to quantify and can vary depending on how you use the EMR. You need to have confidence that your validation exercise represents a sample of your patient charts that cover your EMR charting and practice requirements.
6. It is your responsibility to report any issues experienced to your vendor. It is also your responsibility to confirm that issues are resolved by the vendor to your satisfaction. Issues

that cause patient safety concerns, or have significant workflow impacts, should be reported to the vendor and resolved as soon as possible.

7. If you are using MyHealthNS, be sure to let your vendor know so that you can stay connected with your patients when you migrate. Both Med Access and Accuro are fully integrated with MyHealthNS.
8. All migrating physicians are required to complete a survey at the end of the migration. Your feedback will inform and improve the process for subsequent migrations.
9. We would also like to seek your feedback in the months after you migrate, either through a follow up survey or a focus group. This is an optional step that helps us further improve the process.

### **What is the professional standard regarding Medical Records in Nova Scotia?**

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia have established a professional standard for medical records that includes both paper-based records and records in electronic format. The professional standard and your obligations can be found at <https://cpsns.ns.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Medical-Records.pdf>

### **What is the role of Department of Health and Wellness?**

DHW is responsible for the certification of EMR vendors and the oversight and accountability of migrations to certified EMRs. DHW has established a Migration Project Office made up of internal and external resources with expertise in data extraction and data migration. The project office has been actively working with TELUS Health and QHR Technologies on requirements for certification. This includes specific requirements and standards for migrations in addition to provincial standards needed to support delivery of patient care and to support the strategic and operational objectives of Nova Scotia, and end users.

DHW will manage the project office, provide some support with data extraction from Nightingale on Demand, provide oversight of the EMR vendor managed process, monitor EMR vendor adherence to migration standards/process and evaluate the quality of EMR vendor migrations.

In collaboration with Doctors Nova Scotia, DHW will provide updates on the progress of migrations and will share a quarterly summary report. Should significant issues arise at any time regarding the completeness of data migrated or the quality of data migrated and/or reports of patient safety concerns, DHW will consider all options, including the use of an independent, third-party auditor to validate concerns and provide recommendations on how to resolve them quickly.

### **What should I be doing now to ensure I am ready?**

*For family physicians working in collaborative family practice teams:*

Those physicians working in teams that are operated by NSHA in NSHA locations, please connect with your Primary Health Care Health Services Manager as your first point of contact to discuss the plan for your team.

Those physicians that are operating in a co-leadership model with NSHA, please reach out to your Primary Health Care co-lead if you are interested in learning more about your

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options in partnering with NSHA; there are a number of options to consider and the PHC team will assist in reviewing these with you.

*All other physicians* should be contacting the vendors now and requesting a demo as soon as possible, selecting the EMR that best supports your practice, signing a contract with a preferred EMR vendor, submitting the 'Consent to Grant Access' form through your vendor to the Migration Project Office and securing a clinic migration date.

**TELUS Health**  
**1-888-230-3561 ext. 104**

**QHR Technologies**  
**1-866-454-4681**

The Project Office will trigger all migration payments through MSI after the physician has completed the clinic migration criteria and evaluation survey. Payments will be processed quarterly.

**How long are the migration services available to physicians?**

Migration services are available until December 31, 2019. The DHW and vendors are resourcing the project to ensure migrations are scheduled and completed by this time. Physicians are eligible for funding if they have actively participated in the provincial EMR Migration project (includes physicians from the pilot phase who migrated starting in December 2017), and have completed the eligibility criteria required for payment. If you are a pilot physician who has already migrated and you have questions please contact: [phimprogram@novascotia.ca](mailto:phimprogram@novascotia.ca)

**Who qualifies for migration funding, support and service?**

Any physician requiring migration services currently on Nightingale, Practimax, or Accuro migrating to either Med Access or Accuro. Reasons for migration include physicians impacted by the Nightingale EMR sunset, physicians requiring migration services as they co-locate with others in collaborative care teams using a Certified EMR and physicians who want to move to a Certified EMR.

**What is the Migration Support Incentive and eligibility criteria?**

A one-time incentive of \$2,300 to compensate physicians for time spent by them and their staff ensuring migration of patient records is done in accordance with provincial migration project standards including testing and validating migrated patient data.

To be eligible, physicians must confirm the accuracy and completeness of existing data for the purposes of effective migration. This is in accordance with requirements set out in the Professional Standard regarding Medical Records, as approved by the Council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia.

<https://cpsns.ns.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Medical-Records.pdf>

In particular, physicians must have done the following:

1. Scheduled and confirmed/secured their migration date with their EMR vendor and the DHW Migration Project Office;
2. Ensure their vendor has submitted the signed Consent to Grant Access Forms to the DHW Migration Project Office via fax (902-428-3333) or email ([phimprogram@novascotia.ca](mailto:phimprogram@novascotia.ca));
3. Complied with the migration standards and processes established by the DHW Migration Project Office to protect data quality and patient safety including the following:



- (a) participated in the validation of their migrated data to confirm the accuracy and completeness of the migration of their patients' data
- (b) reported any issues with the migration of their patients' medical charts to their EMR vendor(s) prior to the sign-off referred to in (d) below
- (c) validated the effective resolution of all issues to their satisfaction prior to completing their migration
- (d) signed off on the accuracy of the migration of their data with their EMR vendor
- (e) communicated feedback on their migration experience by completing the DHW issued post-migration survey

#### **What is the eligibility criteria for the \$2300 one-time migration incentive payment?**

The physician must have migrated from a provincial EMR to a Certified EMR between December 1, 2017 and December 31, 2019 and must have met the minimum set of activities for physicians as described above.

#### **What is the Nightingale on Demand (NOD) Incentive and eligibility criteria?**

This is a one-time incentive, up to a maximum of \$3,000, to compensate physicians required to migrate their patient records from Nightingale On-Demand to a Certified EMR Product.

Due to the volume of migrations required, we are encouraging physicians to select a preferred EMR as soon as possible and have the vendor submit a Consent to Grant Access Form to the DHW Migration Project Office so that the clinic migration date can be scheduled.

Eligibility criteria are meant to be supportive of the process and encourage migration planning and clinic scheduling.

To be eligible physicians must have met all of the Migration Support Incentive criteria (above), and must have migrated their patient records from Nightingale On-Demand to a Certified EMR Product.

NOD Incentive amounts are determined as follows:

- Physicians who, between December 1, 2017 and October 31, 2018, secure a migration date with the vendor and DHW and submit their Consent to Grant Access Form to DHW, shall receive the maximum amount of the NOD Migration Incentive (\$3,000). (Note that the migration date may be after October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, but it must be **secured** by October 31<sup>st</sup>.)
- Physicians who, between November 1, 2018 and March 31, 2019, secure a migration date with the vendor and DHW and submit their Consent to Grant Access Form to DHW, shall receive 75% of the maximum NOD Incentive (actual \$2,250). (Note that the migration date may be after March 31, 2019, but it must be **secured** by March 31, 2019.)
- Physicians who, between April 1, 2019 and October 31, 2019, secure a migration date with the vendor and DHW and submit their Consent to Grant Access Form to DHW, shall receive 50% of the maximum NOD Incentive (actual \$1,500) (Note that the migration date may be after October 31, 2019, but it must be **secured** by October 31, 2019.)
- Once a migration date is secured, it is expected that the physician will complete the migration as scheduled. If the scheduled migration date is changed by the DHW Migration Project Office, this will not negatively affect the amount of the incentive to be paid to the physician. If the scheduled migration date is changed by the physician, the new migration secured date will be used to determine eligibility for incentive payments.



**Timing of Payments:** The DHW Migration Project Office will trigger payment of all incentives after the migration has been completed and all eligibility criteria have been met. Payments will be processed through MSI on a quarterly basis. Physicians will be notified by mail that their payment has been processed and it will also be identified on their MSI pay statement.

**What is the EMR Subsidy and eligibility criteria?**

To encourage ongoing EMR use, *existing* provincial EMR users (i.e. Practimax, Accuro and Med Access), who are receiving eResults from provincial information systems, will receive an EMR subsidy of \$200 per month.

Nightingale On Demand physicians will qualify for the subsidy in the month after they have completed their migration to a Certified EMR.

The start date for EMR users meeting the criteria is April 1, 2018. The end date is December 31, 2019 or earlier if a new Physician Master Agreement has been ratified.

**Can the \$10,000 EMR Adoption Grant (Envelope A, as per the 2015-2019 Physician Master Agreement) be claimed by physicians migrating to a new EMR?**

No, Envelope A funding cannot be claimed by a physician undergoing an EMR migration. The current Physician Master Agreement one-time incentive (Envelope A) pays \$10,000 for first time EMR users to adopt an EMR. The new 2018 EMR investments apply only to physicians currently using EMRs. Other EMR incentive payments in the 2015 – 2018 MA are not impacted.

**What if I use my EMR for billing only?**

Physicians who use the EMR for billing only, do not qualify for the Migration Support Incentive or the EMR subsidy.

**How will I receive EMR funding payments?**

All payments to physicians will be triggered by the DHW Migration Project Office and paid through your established payment mechanism with MSI. No fee codes are required.

- 1) The Migration Support Incentive will be processed after the clinic migration has been completed and all eligibility criteria are met.
- 2) The NOD Migration Incentive will be processed after the clinic migration has been completed and all eligibility criteria are met.
- 3) The EMR Subsidy amount is \$200 / month per validated EMR user. Nightingale On Demand physicians will qualify for the subsidy in the month after they have migrated to a Certified EMR. For Accuro, Practimax and Med Access EMR users who meet the eligibility criteria, the subsidy is effective April 1, 2018. The end date for the EMR Subsidy is December 31, 2019 or earlier if a new Physician Master Agreement has been ratified.

**What if I remain on Nightingale after December 31, 2019?**

In the exceptional event that a physician is using the Nightingale On Demand EMR on January 1, 2020, they will experience an increase in their software service and supports costs equivalent to \$325/month for full-time software license users, \$162.50/month for half-time software license users and \$81.25/month for quarter-time software users. Physicians remaining on Nightingale On Demand as of December 31, 2020 will not have a valid contract or the right to use the software. A digital copy

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of their patient charts can be provided to physicians. Requests for digital copies of data will need to be scheduled. Beyond this date, physicians will not be able to access the Nightingale on Demand EMR.

## Definitions

### DHW

Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness

### NOD

Nightingale On Demand EMR

### Physician / Doctor

Refers to physicians licensed under the *Medical Act* currently practicing in Nova Scotia with an active patient roster.

### What is a provincial EMR?

A provincial EMR or electronic medical record is a practice-based computer application that provides longitudinal collection of patient information including a problem list, medication list, allergy list, notes, health maintenance information, social/family history, scheduling, patient registration, chart/patient tracking and fully integrated billing/claims submission. A provincial EMR currently receives eResults from the provincial information systems and is integrated with MyHealthNS.

### What is a provincial EMR user?

A physician (as above) who uses a provincial EMR (as above). For clarity, a physician who uses an EMR as a billing system only is not a provincial EMR user and does not qualify.

### What is a Certified EMR?

A Certified EMR is an EMR product that is certified pursuant to a Master Services Agreement with DHW, or that is undergoing in-process certification by DHW. Med Access (TELUS Health) and Accuro (QHR) are working on certification with priority placed on the validation of migration requirements, standards, including privacy and security. Other certification requirements are in progress.

Certification determines that the EMR Product meets Nova Scotia's assessment criteria, ensuring the EMR meets provincial standards needed to support delivery of quality patient care and to support the strategic and operational objectives of Nova Scotia, and end users. A Certified EMR must conform to all mandatory EMR requirements for the requested certification level. This includes a variety of functional, technical, privacy, interoperability and quality indicator data requirements as well as data migration and reporting requirements. TELUS Health and QHR Technologies received the initial certification requirements in September 2017 and are currently undergoing the certification requirements for their Med Access and Accuro products respectively, in good faith.

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**What is the Consent to Grant Access form?**

“Consent to Grant Access Form” or CGA is a consent form to be signed by a physician and his/her EMR vendor giving consent to DHW to access the physician’s medical records to assist with the transition of these records to your Certified EMR. Once you have selected your preferred EMR, the vendor will have you **sign the CGA form** and they will submit it to the DHW Migration Project Office so that your clinic migration date can be scheduled. The CGA form also prompts for a personalized email for each responsible provider, used to contact providers for the completion of the mandatory post-migration evaluation survey. Completion and submission of this form by you and your vendor is what enables the migration date to be scheduled with the DHW Migration Project Office. No provider’s migration dates will be scheduled or confirmed until a completed form is received.

**What is a secured migration date?**

A secured migration date is the date communicated by the DHW Migration Project Office to EMR vendors and migrating physicians indicating that required project documentation has been received and the migration date has been secured. Once a migration date is secured, it is expected that the physician will complete the migration as scheduled. If the scheduled migration date is changed by the DHW Migration Project Office, this will not negatively affect the amount of the incentive to be paid to the physician. If the scheduled migration date is changed by the physician, the new migration secured date will be used to determine eligibility for incentive payments.

END of FAQ

