

Choosing the Right Path to Electronic Prescribing for Your Practice

Evaluating the many choices of e-prescribing solutions available to you may seem like a daunting task. Start by asking whether your practice is ready for standalone electronic prescribing or an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system.

Stand-alone e-prescribing allows you to access a patient's prescription benefit coverage and prescription history in addition to bi-directional prescription routing with the patient's preferred pharmacy. A stand-alone system is less costly

and easier to implement than an EHR. Adopting an EHR allows you to automate your entire practice and maintain a comprehensive electronic health record for your patients — eliminating paper charts. E-prescribing is one of many functions within an EHR.

Once you have decided on the type of solution for your practice, you will want to contact software vendors to find out more about their products. The following scorecard will help you compare the features of different solutions.

Electronic Prescribing Buyers Guide

Functionality				
Feature	Questions to Ask Vendor	Solution A	Solution B	Solution C
Patient Prescription Benefit Checks	1) Does the software have the ability to provide information on formulary or tiered formulary medications, patient eligibility, and authorization requirements from the patient's drug plan?			
	2) Can it provide information on lower-cost, therapeutically appropriate alternatives?			
Prescription History	1) Does the software have the ability to generate a complete medication list that incorporates data from pharmacies and PBMs (if available)?			
	2) Are you able to update or correct the patient medication history?			
Existing Medications	1) Are medications displayed with prefilled, known, favorite, or standard dosing?			
	2) Does the software allow you to discontinue or remove a medication?			
	3) Does the software allow you to change dosage?			
	4) Does the software allow you to renew one or more medications?			
New Medications & Prescription Writing	1) Does the software provide aids such as favorites-lists?			
	2) Can you search for drugs by name, indication, and formulary?			
	3) Does the software provide drug to drug, drug to allergy and other patient safety alerts?			
	4) Are medications displayed with prefilled, known, favorite, or standard dosing?			
	5) Are you able to enter SIG and other parameters?			

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Functionality (continued)				
Feature	Questions to Ask Vendor	Solution A	Solution B	Solution C
Electronic Prescription Routing	1) Does the software have the ability to transmit prescriptions electronically to the patient's preferred pharmacy using the applicable standards (NCPDP SCRIPT)?			
	2) Will the software allow me or my staff to receive refill requests from pharmacies directly on my computer and send back approvals or denials electronically?			
Hardware & Networking				
Feature	Questions to Ask Vendor	Solution A	Solution B	Solution C
Basic Technology	1) Can the software run on a device such as a PDA or Tablet PC (recommended if your prescribers need easy access to clinical information)?			
	2) Can prescribers access the system from outside the office?			
	3) What are the costs for all hardware, including any required networking equipment?			
Software				
Feature	Questions to Ask Vendor	Solution A	Solution B	Solution C
Additional Questions & Costs	1) Is the software certified by Surescripts for all services including Prescription Benefits, Prescription History, and Prescription Routing?			
	2) Can you pre-populate the e-prescribing system with data from your practice management system?			
	3) Are there any costs associated with the practice management interface service?			
	4) Does the vendor send periodic system updates for ongoing enhancements?			
	5) What are the one time and recurring costs for the software and/or maintenance?			
Vendor Services				
Feature	Questions to Ask Vendor	Solution A	Solution B	Solution C
Training & Support	1) Does the vendor provide training for the physician and staff?			
	2) Is the training onsite or remote?			
	3) Does the vendor provide ongoing support and customer service after implementation?			
	4) What are the training and support costs?			
Financial Incentives				
Feature	Questions to Ask Vendor	Solution A	Solution B	Solution C
Special Offers	1) Are there any special offers such as free trials, rebates or discounts?			
MIPPA Incentive Program	1) Is the software a qualified ¹ e-prescribing system under the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) guidelines?			

If you have any questions about this worksheet, or if you would like additional resources to help you learn more about e-prescribing, please contact the Surescripts Electronic Prescribing Resource Center™ **1-866-RxReady (866-797-3239)**.

¹Ask each vendor to confirm whether their system is qualified under MIPPA guidelines. In addition to having access to a qualified system, prescribers need to meet certain additional requirements to be eligible for the incentive program offered through MIPPA. For more information, visit the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) web site at www.cms.hhs.gov.