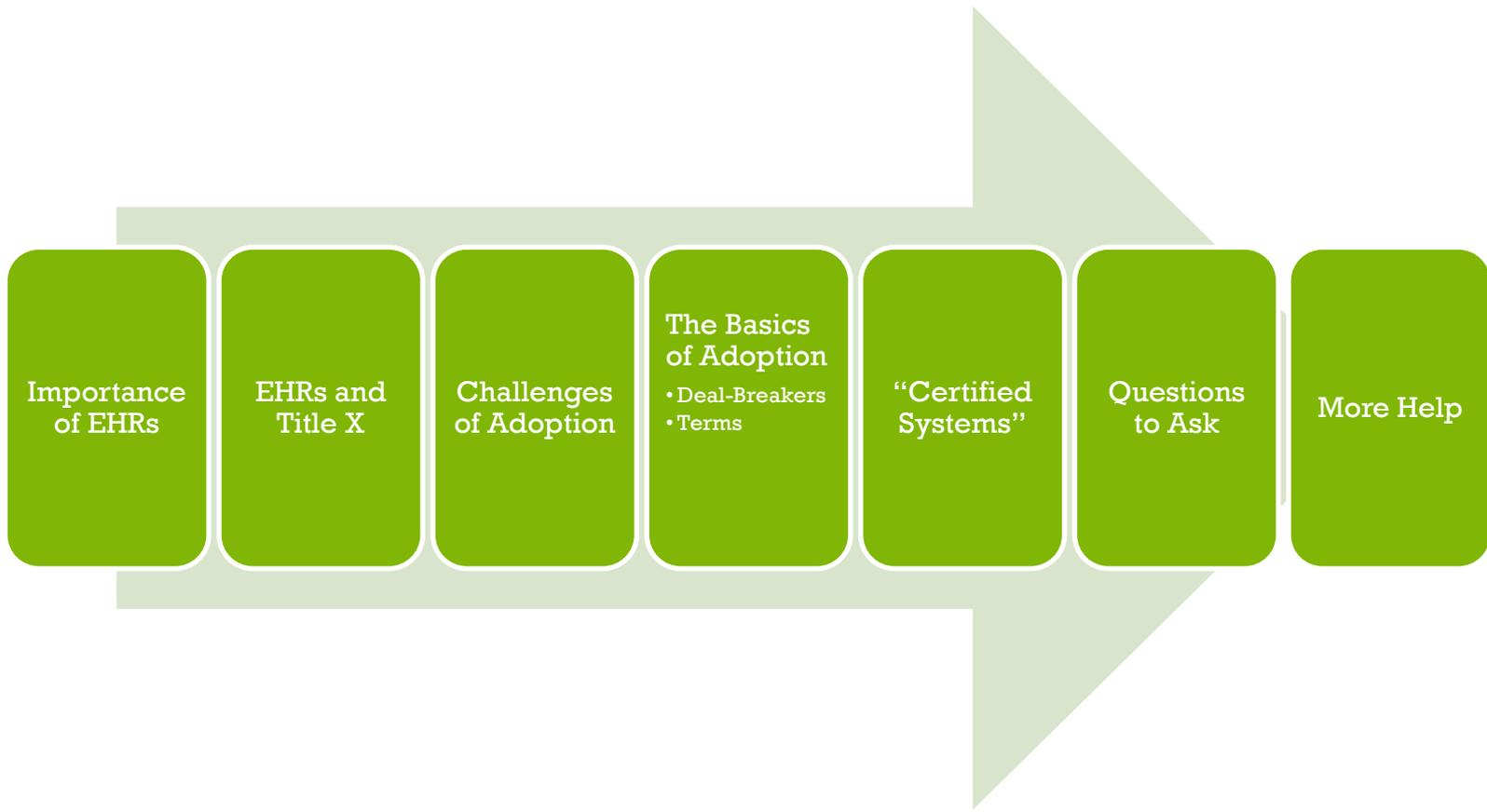


# EHR Adoption Toolkit

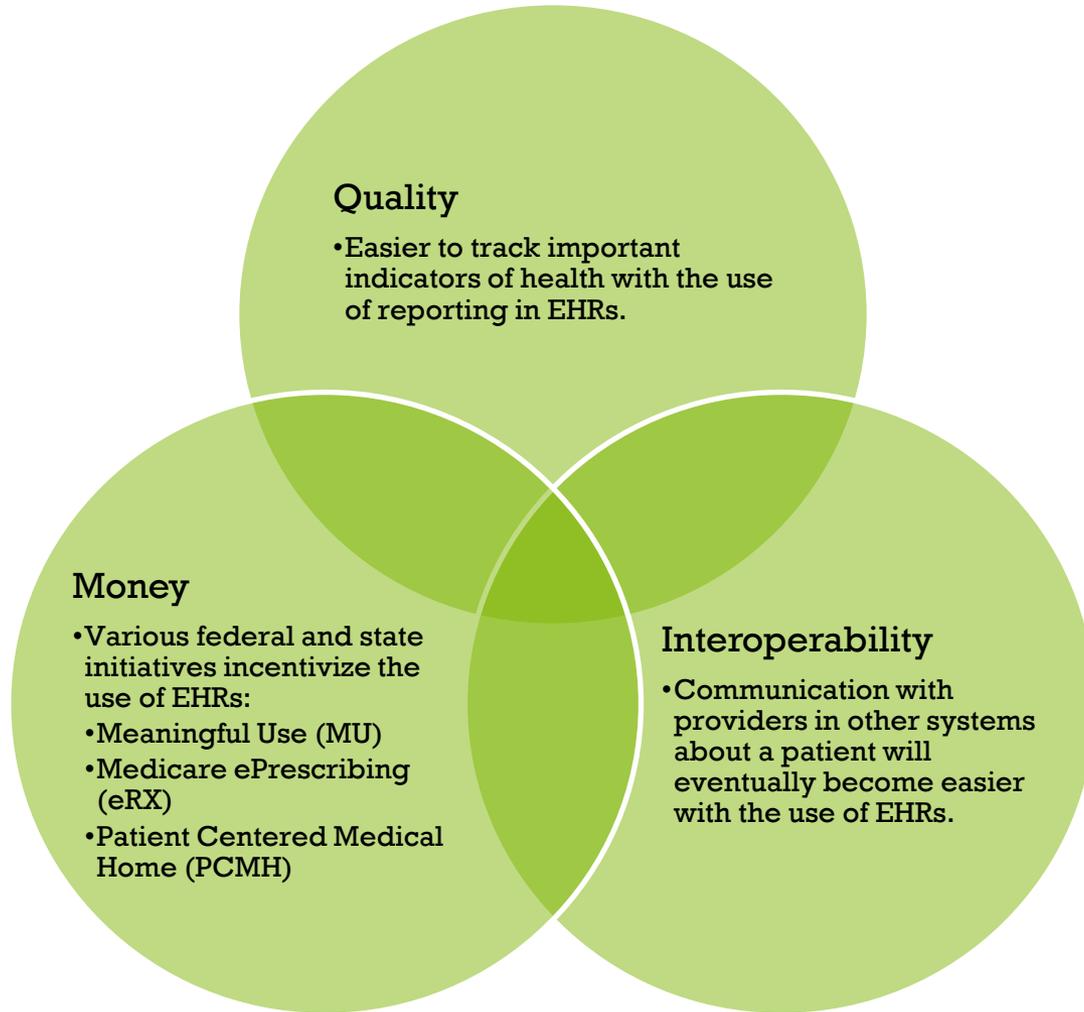
Office of Population Affairs  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Spring 2014

# + Roadmap



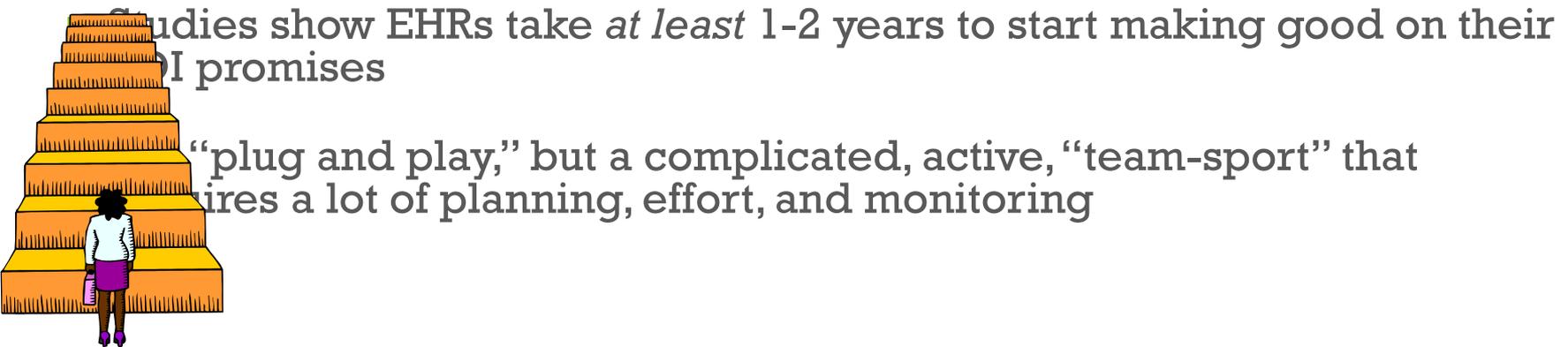
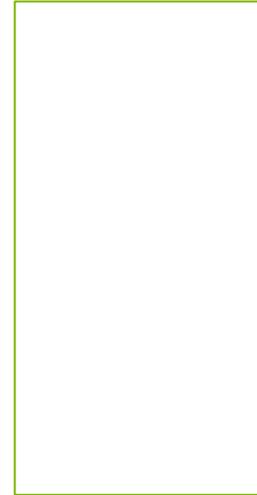


# Why Should I Use an EHR, anyway?

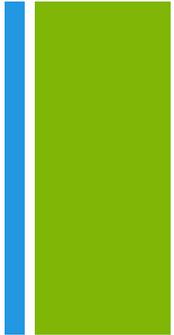


# + Challenges of Adoption and Implementation:

- Financial burden
- Time constraints
- Small staff (or big staff!)
- Workflow (i.e. habit) redesign
- Lack of technical expertise
- Influx of systems on the market
- Forced migration onto a new system due to vendor consolidation



# + Large Scale Solutions



# + General Tips for Adoption



- Define your needs and goals before you start the selection process
  - “Before evaluating vendors, you must evaluate your practice”
  - What do you want the technology to achieve for you?
  - “Don’t buy a Ferrari if you only need a Toyota”
- Three main things a practice needs, to be successful:
  - Time
  - Stamina
  - Leadership
- Patience is important:
  - The average implementation time for a solo practitioner is 12-18 months (longer for bigger practices)

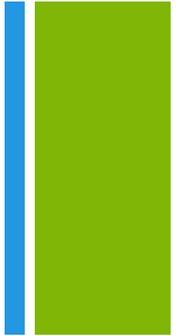


# DEAL-BREAKERS!

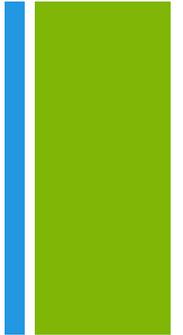


## TWO ABSOLUTE DEAL-BREAKERS:

- 1) **An uncertified system.**
  - Your EHR system must be certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in order to participate in Meaningful Use, and to avoid penalties in the future.
  
- 2) **A company that is unwilling and/or unable to interface with other systems (EHRs, PMSs, HIEs, etc.)**
  - Your EHR system must have the capability to interact with other systems. This is now a requirement of Meaningful Use, as well as other incentive programs. Ask your vendor about this, and be sure they answer you with concrete plans to establish this capability or, ideally, processes that are already in place.



# + “Certified Systems”



- What do you mean by a “certified system”?
  - To be “certified” means that the system is a fully-integrated EHR, and meets certain standards laid out by CMS. A certified EHR is capable of documenting certain information, pulling varying types of reports, and other functionalities.
- How do I know if a system is certified?
  - A vendor will be able to tell you which version of their software (if any) is certified. *However, you should double-check on your own, as well.*

# + What is NOT a Certified System?

## EPM ≠ EHR!

- An Electronic Practice Management System is not the same as an Electronic Health Record!
- EPMs typically only deal with workflow issues like scheduling and billing. EHRs actually contain clinical information, can pull reports, etc.

# + Upgrading to a Certified System

- I am already using an EHR, but it is uncertified. What should I do?
- Ask your vendor if they have a certified version or system already available.
  - If yes:
    - How much will it cost to upgrade?
    - What does the upgrading process involve? (Timeline, new training, extra fees, etc.)
  - If no:
    - Do they have plans to create a certified version?
    - When would that version be ready?
    - Be sure to ask all questions above, as well!

**NOTE:** Be extremely cautious if you are told a certified version is “in the works” or will be coming soon. A concrete solution already in existence is **ALWAYS** your safest bet!

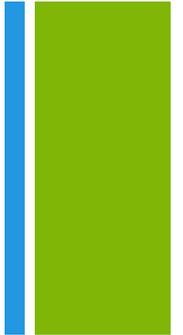


# What if I *JUST* signed a contract for an uncertified system?



- Read your contract
  - Is there any indication you might be able to break the contract, if necessary?
- Have a lawyer read your contract
  - Best to double-check, regardless of what you find in the contract.
- Talk to your vendor
  - Do they have plans to become certified by 2015?
  - When?
  - How much would it cost for me to upgrade?
  - What does that process look like?

# + Questions to ask Yourself



- What are your goals? What do you want the EHR to help you accomplish or change?
- How much money can I realistically devote to implementation?
  - Upfront
  - Monthly
  - Annually
- How much time can I realistically devote to implementation?
  - How many staff members are in my office? (Clinical and Non-Clinical)
    - How many staff members will I have to train?
    - Who will be able to cover day-to-day operations during training?
  - Will any staff members be devoted solely to implementation?



# Questions to Ask Yourself (Cont.)



- Honestly, how much help will I need with implementation?
  - Am I relatively “tech-savvy”, or will I need some assistance?
    - In the beginning
    - Throughout implementation
    - Throughout the use of the product
  - What about my staff? How comfortable are they with technology?
- Am I already using a PMS, billing system, or other electronic system?
  - If so, will I want to keep this system when I adopt an EHR?
    - If so, you will need an EHR that will interface with that system.



# Questions to Ask Your Colleagues



- Which system are you on?
  - Particularly relevant for specialists
- Why did you select that system?
  - Cost?
  - Customizability?
  - Already familiar with it?
  - Required (part of a hospital system or larger practice)?



# Questions to Ask Your Colleagues (Cont.)



- What were your goals, going into adoption/implementation?
  - Attaining MU? Other incentive programs?
  - Improving quality?
  - Streamlining workflow?
  
- How did these goals impact your selection of your system?
  
- Do you feel you have accomplished these goals (or are at least on the path to doing so)?
  - If not, what do you think has been standing in your way?



# Questions to Ask Your Colleagues (Cont.)



- What were the biggest challenges you faced during adoption/implementation?
- Was your vendor helpful in answering questions and helping you resolve issues?
- How long did it take you to become comfortable using the system?

# + Questions to ask Vendors



- Is your software certified?
  - Which version number is the certified one?
  - Is it certified for 2014? (It must be!)
  - Is it just AIU-certified, or is it fully MU-certified?
  
- How much will this cost me?
  - Upfront
  - Monthly
  - Annually
  - Per user/license vs. flat rate
  - For training during implementation
    - Included or extra?
  - For ad hoc assistance
    - Included or extra?



# Questions to Ask Vendors (Cont.)



- How long will this process take?
  - To install the software
  - To go through training
  - Until “go-live”, i.e. fully operational
  
- How does training work?
  - Is it included, or will I have to pay extra?
  - Will you provide me with a designated Project Manager (or something similar)?
  - How long does training last?
  
- What will my customization options be?
  - Can I create templates that are specific to my workflow, specialty, staff needs, and clinical needs?

# + Who to Talk To



## Your Colleagues!

- They have invaluable insights from an *impartial*, clinical perspective, which vendors and RECs won't be able to give you. Ask all the tough questions!

## Vendors

- Find out about as many systems as possible. Do demos!
- Don't forget, you're talking to salespeople.

## Regional Extension Centers (RECs)

- ONC-funded to help providers adopt and implement EHRs, and achieve Meaningful Use.
- Federal funding is ending soon, but there is still time. Call today to find out how they can help!



# + Resources



## Adoption Resources

- List of Certified Systems:  
<http://oncchpl.force.com/ehrcert/ehrproductsearch>
- List of Regional Extension Centers:  
<http://www.healthit.gov/providers-professionals/listing-regional-extension-centers>
- National Training Centers EHR Trainings and Resources :  
<http://www.fpntc.org/search/node?combine=ehr>
- OPA Email Address: [FPAR2.0@hhs.gov](mailto:FPAR2.0@hhs.gov)