

2017 and MACRA are on the way, but now you can pick your pace

AAFP

The march from volume-to-value by way of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 has been steady, and as we prepare to meet 2017, anxiety about the new Quality Payment Program has left many wondering what hurdles they will have to face.

CMS recently announced the [Pick Your Pace Program](#), specifically designed to assist medical providers at different readiness levels as they prepare for MACRA. The announcement was a welcomed development by AAFP Board Chair Robert Wergin, MD, who took it as a sign that CMS not only took into account [AAFP's comment letter in reference to MACRA](#) but also realized physician success in implementing the new payment program benefits everyone in the health care community.

Physicians will have the opportunity to choose four paths to participate in the Quality Payment Program.

- **Test the Quality Payment Program.**
Ensure your system is working and prepare for broader participation in 2018 and 2019.
- **Participate for part of the calendar year.**
Submit data performance for a shorter period of time during 2017 — your choice of what part of the year — and still have time to explore and learn about meaningful use in the Quality Payment Program before diving in fully.
- **Participate for the full calendar year.**
Ready to conquer the MACRA Quality Payment Program on January 1? Go for it.
- **Participate in an Advanced Alternative Payment Model in 2017.**
If you're already in an ACO participating in Tracks 2 or 3 of the Medicare Shared Savings Program, or you practice in another CMS-identified Alternative Payment Model, then this pathway is for you.

This new pick-your-pace approach is a direct result of AAFP and numerous other organizations working hard to make sure the implementation of MACRA's Quality Payment Program does not leave physicians with a learning curve so large it impedes upon the reason MACRA was developed in the first place: improving the value of patient care.