



**Texas Health Care
Information Council**

Two Commodore Plaza
206 East 9th Street, Suite 19.140
Austin, TX 78701
512-482-3312
512-453-2757 (fax)

**Hospital Numbered Letter
Volume 3, Number 12
September 6, 2000**

- 1. Hospitals Not Represented in 1st PUDF**
- 2. Penalties**
- 3. Refinements to Audits for Physician License Data**
- 4. Council Plans for PUDF Pilot**
- 5. Protection of Patient Privacy in the PUDF**
- 6. Data Collection Contract Re-Bid**

1. Hospitals Not Represented in 1st PUDF

Policy/communications

The Public Use Data File (PUDF) will be released in December 2000. This first release will contain hospital discharge data for the first and second quarters of 1999. Some hospitals did not comply with reporting requirements by either failing to submit data for one or both of those quarters, or by reporting too late for inclusion in the PUDF. The Council plans to identify non-compliant hospitals in the User Manual made available with the PUDF. Formal letters of notification will be sent to the CEO of each non-compliant hospital prior to the December data release.

2. Penalties

Policy

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) has recommended that hospitals who fail to get data into the PUDF be assessed additional penalties above and beyond those already assessed due to late submission of data. THCIC stresses to hospitals that the deadline for inclusion of 4th quarter 1999 data in the PUDF is October 2, 2000.

3. Refinements to Audits for Physician License Data

Operational

Refinements to the audits and procedures for physician data are being made at this time. These changes will address two situations where valid license numbers are being rejected as incorrect. Descriptions of the issues involved and the ensuing procedure and audit changes follows. Until these procedures and audit take effect, claims rejected due to one of the stated reasons should be marked "process as is" and resubmitted.

Situation #1: Using "temporary" license numbers for attending physicians.

Background:

Physicians new to Texas who have met application and testing requirements receive a paper certificate from the Texas State Board of Medical Examiners (TSBME) allowing them to practice before they receive their permanent license from the TSBME. These certificates do not include an identification number of any sort for that new physician. The length of time that physicians practice using a paper certificate

normally is two to three months (depending on when the TSBME board meets), but can be as long as one year.

Problem This Causes:

Currently, this group of physicians is not in the THCIC practitioner license file; thus, they cannot be validated and are being errored as having invalid license numbers when placed in the attending physician slot on the physician record.

Recommended Hospital Procedure Change:

For physicians that have temporary certificates from the TSBME, each hospital should assign a temporary number to each of these physicians until a permanent license number is received. The format for the temporary number is as follows: 'TXTnnn', 'RESnnn', 'TEMnnn', or 'OTHnnn' where nnn is three characters or numerical digits chosen by the hospital.

Once a permanent state license number has been received, the hospital should immediately begin **using that number and the name as it appears on the license**. All claims for the quarter in which the permanent number is assigned should contain that permanent number. The temporary number assigned by hospitals will not be mapped to permanent license numbers once they are assigned.

THCIC Audit Change:

The audit for 'attending physician' will be modified to accept a valid UPIN, a valid state license number, or a temporary number in the format noted above.

Implementation Date:

The effective date for this audit change will be September 1, 2000.

Situation #2: Allowing for the '80' (Physician) record to contain either State license numbers or UPINs.

Background:

THCIC's hospital discharge data collection system currently requires that all physician identifiers on each '80' record contain license numbers of the type designated in the Physician Qualifying Code field. While this is consistent with Medicare, it is not necessarily consistent with other payers.

Problem This Causes:

Claims that have physician identifiers that are not of the type indicated in the Physician Qualifying Code field are being rejected by the system as being invalid. These identifiers may be on the THCIC Practitioner license file but are not recognized because the physician identifiers are not "typed" correctly.

Recommended Hospital Procedure Change:

The '80' record may contain any physician identifiers that are valid. The Physician Qualifying Code should contain the qualifying code for the Attending Physician.

THCIC Audit Change:

The audit for all physician identifier validations will be modified to search the Practitioner reference files for either a State license number or a UPIN. Only if the identifier is not found on any of the reference files will the identifier be rejected with an error message (915, 916, 918, or 919).

Implementation Date:

Target date is for October 1, 2000.

4. Council Plans for PUDF pilot

Communications

Four hospitals (and/or hospital systems) have agreed to participate in a pilot testing of the Council's first Public Use Data File (PUDF). As part of this pilot, MD Anderson in Houston, Methodist in San Antonio, and both Presbyterian and Parkland in Dallas will receive a User Manual and a PUDF file that contains their own hospital's data. The purpose of this pilot is to

test data accessibility and ease of use of the PUDF. The PUDF pilot will be conducted in late September. A special "thanks" is extended from the Council to each of these institutions.

5. Protection of Patient Privacy in the PUDF

Policy/communications

Council staff is preparing a proposal concerning how to handle patient privacy sensitive data elements (ZIP code, age, sex, race/ethnicity, and others). Staff will present their proposal to the

joint HIS/HDD committee meeting on September 8, 2000.

6. Data Collection Contract Re-Bid

Operational

The contract for the initial phase of collecting hospital data, currently being done by THIN, expires at the end of the year and has been re-bid. THCIC received several proposals subsequent to its recent Request for Offers (RFO) and is now in the process of reviewing these proposals. Members of the evaluation committee include Ray Symons - HIS Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) chair, Eddie Cuellar - HIS TAC member, Dr. Bob Gracy, Hospital Discharge Data Committee member, Dr. Bruce Burns, THCIC staff, and Ron Weiss, THCIC staff. The successful bidder will be announced soon.

Upcoming Meetings or Training

Joint meeting of the Hospital Discharge Data (HDD) Committee and the Health Information Systems (HIS) Technical Advisory Committee: September 8, 2000, 9:00 a.m., room 102 at 333 Guadalupe (Texas Department of Insurance Hobby Building) in Austin.

Joint meeting of the Quality Methods and Consumer Education Technical Advisory Committees: September 15, 2000, 9:30 a.m., room 19.126 at 206 East 9th Street (Two Commodore Plaza) in Austin.

THCIC Board: September 23, 2000 at 10:00 a.m. at 1100 W 49th Street (TDH Board Room) in Austin. Meetings of the Health Plan Data and Hospital Discharge Data committees will precede these meetings.

Agendas for all Technical Advisory Committee, Committee, and Council meetings are posted on the THCIC web site and the Texas Register seven days prior to the meeting date.

Upcoming Deadlines

4th quarter 1999 corrections - October 2, 2000

1st quarter 1999 certification – October 2, 2000

2nd quarter 1999 certification – October 2, 2000

2nd quarter 2000 initial submission – October 2, 2000 (extended from September 1, 2000)

Questions?

Phone: (888) 308-4953 Fax (804) 979-1047 Email: THCIChelp@comclin.net

Web site: www.thcic.state.tx.us

3 of 3

Questions?

Phone: (888) 308-4953 Fax (804) 979-1047 Email: THCIChelp@comclin.net

Web site: www.thcic.state.tx.us

3 of 3