



**Texas Health Care
Information Council**

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**Hospital Numbered Letter
Volume 3, Number 10**

August 4, 2000

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1. THCIC Staff Change E-mail Addresses

Operational

THCIC has been assigned a new format for e-mail addressed to staff, as follows:

Firstname.Lastname@thcic.state.tx.us

Key contacts for hospitals at THCIC are:

Bruce.Burns@thcic.state.tx.us

Dee.Shaw@thcic.state.tx.us

Terry.Salazar@thcic.state.tx.us

REMINDER

When corresponding with THCIC in writing, please include the six digit THCIC facility ID# that the correspondence references.

2. Upcoming Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

Policy/Operational/Technical

The Health Information Systems Technical Advisory Committee will hold its next meeting on August 15, 2000 at 9:00 a.m., room 19.126 at 206 East 9th Street in Austin. The agenda will be available on THCIC's web site or the Texas Register after August 7th.

3. Cheers for Those Who've Completed the First Certification

Operational

Of the 414 hospitals that are required to submit certification forms for 1st quarter '99 data, 53% have done so. Another 24% of eligible hospitals have requested to extend their 1st quarter certification into the next quarter.

THCIC staff and Council congratulate you on your efforts and success in this initial crack at certification. It's only going to get easier folks!

4. Consequence of Failing to Submit the Certification Form for 1st Quarter 99 Data

Policy

1st quarter 1999 certification forms (or written requests for an extension) were due to THCIC *no later than* July 31, 2000. Twenty-two percent of Texas reporting hospitals failed to meet this requirement. For this quarter's data, and for this quarter ONLY, THCIC has decided to assume that these hospitals intended to request an extension of the 1st Quarter 99 data certification deadline to coincide with the submission of the certification letter for 2nd Quarter 99 data due on October 2, 2000.

This decision will be communicated to hospital CEOs via a certified letter from THCIC's

Executive Director, Jim Loyd. Overlooking this infraction of the rules will be a one-time occurrence. It is imperative that 100% of reporting hospitals submit their certification forms for 1st and 2nd quarter 1999 data by October 2, 2000.

5. Submitting Comments at Certification

Comments made with certification (if certifying with comments) must be sent electronically using the "dial-in" method to Commonwealth (in Virginia) or mailed on diskette (ASCII format only). Hospitals that choose to NOT certify but who wish to submit comments on the data may do so following the same procedure. The Commonwealth address for mailing the "comment" diskette is:

Commonwealth Clinical System
1650 State Farm Blvd.
Charlottesville, VA 22911

*Be sure to label your diskette with the 6 digit facility ID.

6. To Certify or Not to Certify: That is the Question

Please keep in mind that THCIC's certification process includes a certification form which gives the signer (hospital CEO) two options: to certify or to NOT certify. In other words, hospitals may exercise the choice of not certifying their data; however they must inform the Council via THCIC's certification form that they have made the choice to NOT certify their data. Choosing to NOT certify data does not mean that it won't be included in the Public Use Data File. The rules which govern THCIC's collection of hospital discharge data state that "A hospital's failure to execute the certification form shall not

prevent the executive director from releasing the hospital's data if the director believes the data submitted is reasonably accurate and complete".

7. 2nd Quarter 99 Certification Data Has Been Distributed

2nd Quarter 99 Certification files were either mailed out by 2 day service or placed in a hospital's electronic mailbox on July 31, 2000. Files that were sent by mail were sent to the attention of the THCIC hospital liaison.

THCIC hospital liaisons receiving the file by electronic download should have received a fax or e-mail that the file was in their electronic mailbox. If your facility has not received the 2nd Quarter 99 certification data file, please contact the Helpdesk at THCIChelp@comclin.net or via telephone at 888-308-4953. Remember...the deadline for submitting the certification form for 2nd Quarter 99 data is October 2, 2000.

8. Upcoming Deadlines

Policy/Operational

Final day for corrections to 3q99 – August 18, 2000*
Submission of 2q00 data due – September 1, 2000
Certification letters for 2q99 due – October 2, 2000
Final day for corrections to 4q99 – October 2, 2000

A complete schedule showing deadlines for multiple quarters is posted on the THCIC web site. Go to "Reporting Requirements Hospitals" and click on "General Information".

*Note -- Due to Commonwealth's smooth startup for processing certification data we have been able to extend this date from August 1st.

Questions?

Phone: (888) 308-4953 Fax (804) 979-1047 Email: THCIChelp@comclin.net
Web site: www.thcic.state.tx.us