



**Texas Health Care
Information Council**

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**Hospital Numbered Letter
Volume 3, Number 14**

October 4, 2000

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THCIC Hospital Training

Training will cover submission of data, correction of data, and certification of data.

October 23, 2000

9:00 – 4:00

at the Capitol Extension Auditorium (Austin) on the corner of San Jacinto and 11th Street.

To sign up for the training, please call Sandra Martin at 512-482-3312.

**1. Updated Schedule Information for
Hospitals**

Operations

To reduce the confusion and congestion between completion of 1st and 2nd quarter certification and the release of the 3rd quarter certification files, distribution of the 3rd quarter certification files **on CD** has been scheduled for Oct 5 – 8.

Distribution to mailboxes is scheduled to be complete on Oct. 5th.

An updated schedule for submission, correction, and certification of data timelines has been updated on the THCIC web site at www.thcic.state.tx.us. The schedule details

due dates on the timelines through fourth quarter 1999 certification and lists the submission timelines for 3Q00, 4Q00, 1Q01, and 2Q01. Go to

<http://www.thcic.state.tx.us/hospitals/schedule/schedule.htm>.

2. New Release of Certview Software

Operations

A new version of the Certview software application has been developed by Commonwealth and will be placed on the THCIC website for downloading. The 3rd quarter data file names have been modified to work only with this new release of the software

in order to prevent inadvertent use of a prior version of the software. Please contact the Commonwealth helpdesk at (888) 308-4953 if you have difficulty downloading the software.

3. Submitting Comments on Certification Data

Operational

Hospitals electing to comment on their data have two avenues for forwarding their comments:

(1) Transmitting them to Commonwealth via your hospital's designated electronic mailbox, or
(2) Putting them on a diskette and mailing them to Commonwealth. Hardcopy (on paper) cannot be accepted.

The address for mailing diskettes to Commonwealth Clinical Systems is:
1650 State Farm Blvd.
Charlottesville, VA 22911

Comments for the first and second quarter 1999 must be submitted to CCS no later than October 6, 2000 in order to allow time for appending them to each hospital's data. If you are not sure comments were sent (if certifying with comments) to CCS, please contact the Helpdesk at (888) 308-4953.

4. Clarification on Process for Making Changes to Data at Certification

Operational

We all hope that you will have fewer and fewer issues to resolve as you move through certification of the remaining quarters of 1999 data. But if you see that changes are needed during the certification process, you may contact Commonwealth directly about submitting the changes. You do not need to notify THCIC if you want to make changes during the certification time period. If you need Commonwealth's assistance with making changes, they will inform you of any charges before they begin processing your changes.

5. Patient Data Confidentiality and Data Suppression

Policy/Communications

In order to better protect patient confidentiality and to prevent the release of data known to be erroneous, the Hospital Discharge Data Committee considered recommendations concerning data suppression from the Quality Methods and Hospital Information Systems Technical Advisory Committees at its meeting on September 22, 2000. The Committee's recommendations, adopted by the Council, are as follows:

- The last two digits of the patient ZIP code will be suppressed if there are fewer than thirty patients in the ZIP code.
- The entire ZIP code and the gender code are suppressed if the ICD-9-CM code indicates alcohol or drug use or an HIV diagnosis.
- Age is represented by 22 age group codes for the general patient population and 5 age group codes for the HIV and alcohol and drug use patient populations.
- Hospital charge data will not be released until data for the third quarter 2000 is released.
- Physician identifiers will be suppressed in the PUDF.
- Secondary source of payment data will not be released until data for the third quarter 2000 is released.
- Admission Source as reported by hospitals is suppressed when the Admission Type is 'newborn'. Data users can use ICD-9-CM codes to correctly identify the clinical status of newborns.

A complete list of data elements to be included in the PUDF to be released in December 2000 is on the THCIC web site at http://www.thcic.state.tx.us/hospitals/data_elements.htm. A list of data elements that will not be released in December is at http://www.thcic.state.tx.us/hospitals/data_elements_suppressed.htm.

6. Progress Report on Certification Process

Operational

Status as of October 2, 2000

	1 st Quarter 1999 393 expected to submit certification letters	2 nd Quarter 1999 389 expected to submit certification letters
	Count Percentage	Count Percentage
Received	348 89%	316 81%
Outstanding	45 11%	73 19%

7. THCIC Officers Elected

Policy

At the September 22, 2000 meeting of the Texas Health Care Information Council, Dr. Lewis Foxhall assumed leadership as the Chair. The Council expressed its gratitude to Jack Blaz for serving as Acting Chair in the months since Dr. Stephen Turner resigned. At the same meeting, officers elected were:

Vice-Chair: Dr. Robert Gracy, Ft. Worth, Health Data Expert (recent recipient of the International Achievement Award for Science and Medicine from the World Affairs Council of Greater Ft. Worth),

and

Secretary: Imogen Papadopolous, J.D., Houston, Consumer Representative

8. Data Collection Contract Awarded

Operational

The contract for collection of the hospital data has been awarded to THIN, the current data collection contractor. Thus no transition will be required of hospitals. The effective date of the new contract is January 1st, 2001.

9. Council Plans to Discount Early Orders of the PUDF

Operational/Communications

Council staff are working now on the system for submitting orders for the PUDF files. Included in that system will be a special pricing structure for early purchasers. PUDF-participating

hospitals who be offered the greater discounts. Look to the next edition of the Hospital Numbered Letter for details!

Upcoming Meetings or Training

THCIC Board: December 1, 2000. Times and location to be announced.

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

3rd quarter 1999 certification files distributed – October 8, 2000
4th quarter 1999 corrections cut-off – October 20, 2000
3rd quarter 1999 changes on certification files cut-off – November 9, 2000
3rd quarter 1999 certification letters due – December 1, 2000
3rd quarter 2000 submission due – December 1, 2000
4th quarter 1999 certification files distributed – December 1, 2000

Questions?

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