Texas Health Care Information Council

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Visit our Web site at http://www.thcic.state.tx.us

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TO: Chief Executive Officers of Texas Hospitals

FROM: Jim Loyd, Executive Director *(jloyd@thcic.state.tx.us)*.

THCIC Hospital Numbered Letter - Volume 3 Number 3

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1 Schedule Changes

At the March 18, 2000 THCIC meeting, the Council unanimously approved the recommendation of its Hospital Discharge Data (HDD) Committee to 1) delay the first public release of data until December of

2000, and to 2) suppress certain financial-related data in the release(s) of the first six quarters of hospital data (1st Quarter 1999 through 2nd Quarter 2000). Specifically, the data suppressed will consist of revenue data and secondary and tertiary payer source data.

This action was taken in response to the knowledge gained through the pilot project. The revised schedule for the remainder of the calendar year follows:

THCIC HOSPITAL DISCHARGE PROJECT KEY ACTIVITIES AND DUE DATES AS OF 3/18/2000	
Pilot Complete cycle for pilot Review pilot results for final adjustments	 Apr 07 Apr 21
Certification Training Complete documentation and training curriculum Conduct Training sessions - Lubbock (4/25), Dallas (4/26), Houston (4/27), Corpus Christi (4/28), Austin (5/2)	 Apr 15 Apr 24 - May 02
State-wide Certification - 1st Quarter '99 Certification data and reports distributed to all hospitals Hospitals certify data Hospitals' certification letter due	 May 02 May 02 - Jul 31 Jul 31
State-wide Certification - 2nd Quarter '99 Certification data and reports distributed to all hospitals Hospitals certify data Hospitals' certification letter due	 July 31 Jul 31 - Sept 30 Sept 30
Create Public Use Data File 1st Quarter '99 Available for Internal Use 1st & 2nd Quarter '99 Available for Public Request	 Sep 01 Dec 15

2 Certification Training Rescheduled for April

THCIC training sessions on the certification process have been scheduled in 5 cities around the state during April. This training provides instruction on the steps required of hospitals by THCIC when data is returned to the hospital for comments. It is not training on THCIC's submission and correction procedures. Please fax your registration to Dee Shaw at 512-424-6491 by April 14.

Due to the amount of time required for the certification training, the refresher training sessions on "Claims Submission and Corrections" previously planned for the same days will be conducted as a separate training held in Austin at a later date, most likely in May or June.

Certification Training Schedule

April 25
Lubbock

Holiday Inn Park
3201 Loop 289 South
Hotel Reservations: 806-797-3241

April 26
Dallas
Radisson Hotel Dallas
1893 W Mockingbird Ln
Hotel Reservations: 214-634-8850

April 27
Houston
Howard Johnson
9604 S Main
Hotel Reservations: 713-666-1411

April 28
Corpus Christi
Ramada Inn Bayfront
601 N Water Street
Hotel Reservations: 361-882-8100

May 2
Austin
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 N Lamar, Rm 1410
Hotel accommodations in Austin have not been arranged

Time: 9:00am - 4:00 pm
Cost: Free

3 Update on Certification Pilot

THCIC continues to feel the certification pilot was an extremely valuable exercise. It uncovered some needs for changes to the data correction process which the Council has already moved to implement. Perhaps more importantly, it increased awareness among hospitals regarding the critical nature of this project. The Council wishes again to express its gratitude to those hospitals that helped us test the effectiveness of the hospital discharge data collection system from start to finish.

The Certification Pilot will officially end on April 7th. At that time those pilot hospitals that have not gotten their data to the point that it can be certified will follow the schedule for all hospitals (with a due date of July 31st).

On March 20th, THCIC received its first "Certification Letter" from one of the pilots, the **San Marcos Treatment Center** (SMTC). Congratulations to Barbara Williamson and Jim McKee of the SMTC for leading the first hospital in Texas through the entire data collection process, from initial submission to final certification!

4 Claim Corrections: Pay Now or Pay Later

The last issue of the Hospital Numbered Letter Volume 3, Number 2 outlined the three main problem areas that were uncovered during certification by the pilot hospitals. Hospitals should review their data for problems before submission to THCIC (whether this is accomplished in-house or via a vendor), looking in particular for duplicate revenue data and missing payer codes, along with mapping problems.

The bottom line on the revenue and payer code problems is that the records must be constructed according to UB-92 format standards. The people in your hospital with the most experience working with the construction of UB-92s are undoubtedly working in Billing or Accounts Receivable. Get those people on your team NOW!

An effective method of uncovering mapping problems (the inadvertent programming of valid codes, but into the wrong field) is for a person familiar with the types of patients and services typically provided at that hospital to review the data. This is typically a Quality Assurance employee.

5 Update on Returning All Claims at Certification

At the recommendation of the HIS TAC and the pilot hospitals, THCIC staff presented to the HDD Committee a proposal to return all claims to the hospitals at the time of certification and to provide a mechanism for hospitals to correct and return claims to Commonwealth for re-processing. THCIC staff estimated this to be a six month development effort with programming costs of $45,000. Funding for this project is being sought; however the project cannot begin until funding is available. The HDD Committee asked THCIC staff to work with the HIS TAC to identify alternative solutions, both short and long term. Thus for at least the next two quarters, the corrections mechanism will continue to be follows:

- Submit changes on a case-by-case basis using the cancel and/or replacement transactions, OR
- Have Commonwealth delete claim groups (from batches to whole quarters of data) and resubmit the entire group of claims. This option has a cost to the hospital.

The first option is the option that is normal to UB-92 processing and claim re-submittal for the processing of claims for Medicare payment. The second option was requested by hospitals in relation to this project.

6 Delinquent Hospitals Penalized

Beginning March 3, 2000, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), as part of a THCIC initiative to improve reporting compliance by some hospitals in Texas, sent letters to 91 hospitals throughout the state that have either neglected to report or that did not meet reporting deadlines on 1st or 2nd Quarter 1999 data. Only hospitals deemed to be excessively late received letters from the OAG. The letters are directed to the Chief Executive Officer or Administrator of each delinquent hospital, and require that a settlement be concluded by that administrator with the Council's Executive Director within 30 days in order to avoid legal action being taken against the hospital.

7 Committee Membership Changes

The Council has asked Ray Symons of Scott and White Hospital to assume the responsibility of providing leadership to the Health Information Systems (HIS) Technical Advisory Committee. The HIS TAC has been the principal TAC providing advice to the Council as it has moved to design and implement Texas' hospital discharge data collection system. The Council also increased the size of the committee by one, thereby assuring that the voice of the consumer is represented. Lisa McGiffert of Consumers Union was appointed to that position. Applications are solicited now for a vacant position on the HIS TAC, to be filled at the next Council meeting scheduled for June 2nd. An explanation of the TAC application process, an application form, and the missions of each Technical Advisory Committee can be found on the Council's web site.

In addition to hospital representation on the HIS TAC, hospital representatives also provide advice related to the Council's hospital discharge data system to the Consumer Education and the Quality Methods TACs. The Council welcomes two new hospital representatives to the Quality Methods TAC: Jackie Mutz of Parkland and Susan McBride of Presbyterian, both in Dallas.

Technical Advisory Committee members serve as advisors to THCIC staff, providing a vital connection to the issues that emerge on projects of this sort. Hospitals are encouraged to use these members as conduits for questions, suggestions and concerns.

8 Proposed Changes to Hospital Rules

At the March 18, 2000 Council meeting, the Council unanimously approved the recommendation of its Hospital Discharge Data (HDD) Committee propose changes to the Rules which govern THCIC's hospital discharge data collection system (Texas Administrative Code Title 25, Part 16, Sections 1301.11-19). The changes can be summarized as follows:

- Composition of the Public Release Data File (PUDF)
- Changes to the Council's enabling legislation from the last session of the Texas Legislature (HB1513)
    a. Definitions (Accurate and Consistent Data, Certification, Edit and Validation)
    b. Minimum cell size (Protection of Physician Identity); and
    c. Scientific Review Panel.
- Added language to include transition to ANSI X12N and HIPAA requirements.
- Certification Process.

The next step in the rule changing process is for THCIC to post the proposed new rules in the Texas Register, offering the general public (including hospitals of course!) to make comments on the proposed changes. We anticipate this to occur around the middle of April. The next issue of this newsletter will include a summary of the proposed changes, including a summarized list of the elements to be included in the PUDF.