

Syndromic Surveillance- Meaningful Use Implementation Guidance

Background

The vision of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act of 2009 is to improve the health of Americans and the performance of the nation's health system through health information technology. It is no longer enough for healthcare providers to purchase an electronic medical records system; the purpose of HITEC¹ is to ensure that these systems are interoperable and that providers use these systems in a meaningful way.

One of the HITECH goals is to improve Population and Public Health. Achieving this goal requires that:

- Providers use certified records systems with the capability to exchange information among disparate systems; and
- Nationwide standards for information exchange are established and used;
- Patient record privacy and security is maintained.

Eligible professionals and hospitals must complete at least one of the available core public health objectives to meet Stage 1 Meaningful Use (MU). Syndromic Surveillance (SS) is required for eligible hospitals in Stage 2 of MU.

This document describes the process for meeting the SS Public Health Option in order to receive incentive payments. Hospitals and providers are able to apply for SS approval.

There are three steps to Meaningful Use:

1. Acquire a certified EHR system or module,
2. Use the system as the rules require, and
3. Attest that the data was submitted as required.

Technical assistance for providers is available through a Regional Extension Center Program² (REC). Monetary incentives³ are available to providers who are meaningful users.

Eligible Hospitals & Providers Seeking Meaningful Use Attestation

Hospitals/Providers:

As of May 10, 2012, the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) has been ready to accept tests of submission.

If your facility wishes to begin tests of submission, please contact the SS Coordinator at UDOH: (email: mmanes@utah.gov; phone: 801-538-6191).

Message Transmission

Ongoing messages must be submitted in a secured manner. UDOH is capable of receiving messages through PHIN-MS, direct connections (sFTP or TCP), or via the Utah Health Information Network⁴ (UHIN).

Message Format

Messages may be in HL7 v. 2.5.1 or HL7 v. 2.3.1 data exchange format using the appropriate PHIN messaging guide for syndromic surveillance⁵. Submitters will validate their message format using Message Quality Framework⁶ and the NIST SS Validation Tool⁷ prior to submitting to public health.

Message Content

Messages from emergency department and urgent care facilities should contain the data elements outlined in the PHIN messaging guide for syndromic surveillance⁵ and, for inpatient and ambulatory clinical care facilities, the ISDS Recommendations for Syndromic Surveillance⁸.

Attestation

To qualify for Stage 1 MU, you must perform at least one test of your capacity to provide electronic SS data in the specified HL7 format to public health. For Stage 2, you must successfully submit data on an ongoing basis.

Successful submission means to send an MQF-approved message with the appropriate core data elements and have it transmitted securely and received in appropriate format at UDOH. The SS coordinator will work with you to start that process.

Resources

1. Office of the National Coordinator- Regulations and Information on Meaningful Use
<http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=2996&mode=2>
2. Regional Extension Center for Utah – Health Insight
<http://www.healthinsight.org/Internal/REC.html>
3. Utah’s Medicaid Electronic Health Record Incentive Payment Program
<http://health.utah.gov/medicaid/provhtml/HIT.htm>
4. Utah Health Information Network (UHIN)
<http://mychie.org/community/>
5. PHIN Messaging Guide For Syndromic Surveillance: Emergency Department And Urgent Care Data
http://www.cdc.gov/phn/library/guides/PHIN%20MSG%20Guide%20for%20SS%20Final_508readyRelease1_9%2004%2027%202013.pdf
6. Public Health Information Network’s Message Quality Framework (MQF)
<http://www.cdc.gov/phn/resources/certification/MQFtool-overview.html>
7. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Syndromic Surveillance HL7 V2 Validation Tool
<http://hl7v2-ss-testing.nist.gov/mu-syndromic/>
8. ISDS Electronic Syndromic Surveillance Using Hospital Inpatient and Ambulatory Clinical Care EHR Data Recommendations
http://syndromic.org/storage/ISDS_2012-MUse-Recommendations.pdf

Key Contacts for Syndromic Surveillance

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