



# NPDB-HIPDB DATA BANK NEWS



National Practitioner Data Bank—Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank

JANUARY 2008

## Upcoming Data Bank Improvements

Several user-friendly enhancements are coming to the Data Banks this month.

### UPDATES REQUIRE E-MAIL ADDRESS

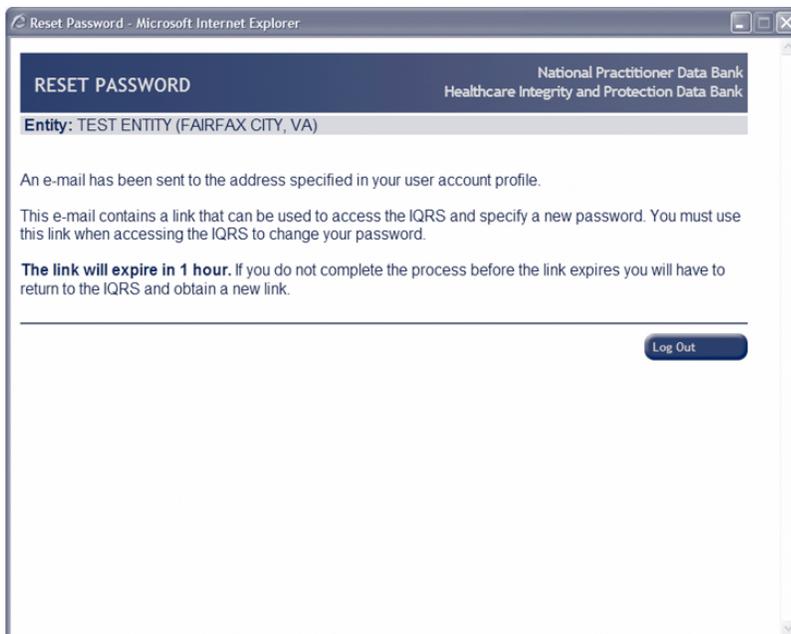
In January, all user updates will require a valid e-mail address. In addition, when an entity updates its Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS) profile, the Data Banks will no longer collect the entity's corporate e-mail address, but instead will require the Entity Data Bank Administrator's e-mail address.

### IQRS PASSWORD RESET SERVICE

To reset your Data Bank password without having to contact the Customer Service Center, you must have an e-mail address on file with the Data Banks and know your expired password. To reset your password, log in to the IQRS and click **Reset Password** on the *System Error* screen. An e-mail will be sent to the e-mail address specified in the IQRS user account and will contain a link which the entity must click to access the IQRS using their expired password. The user

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is then prompted to create a new password. See Figure 1 to view the new *Reset Password* screen. **Note:** The new password link expires after 1 hour. Entities that do not complete the password reset process before the link expires will have to return to the IQRS to reset their password.

### ELECTRONIC REPORT CHANGE NOTIFICATIONS

When a report is corrected by the entity or disputed by the subject, a paper copy of the changed report is

Figure 1. The Reset Password screen enables users to change their passwords themselves.

See *Upcoming Data Bank Improvements* on page 3

# Data Bank Outreach and Education Activities

The Practitioner Data Banks Branch (PDBB) is increasing its outreach and education activities to share information with Data Bank users as well as gather and respond to their concerns. The following is a list of upcoming meetings.

**American Association of State Counseling Boards (AASCB) Conference** (New Orleans, LA, January 10-12). Staff will speak about Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) reporting requirements and provide updates on Data Bank issues.

**Federation of Associations of Regulatory Boards (FARB) Forum** (Santa Fe, NM, January 26-28). Staff will speak on the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and the HIPDB.

**South Texas Association of Medical Staff Professionals Conference** (San Antonio, TX, February 1). Staff will provide information about the Data Banks.

**National Credentialing Forum (NCF)** (Palm Springs, CA, February 7-8). Staff will participate in a national practitioner credentialing think tank.

**Defense Research Institute (DRI) Medical Liability and Healthcare Law Seminar** (San Francisco, CA, March 12-14). Staff will speak about the NPDB and the HIPDB.

**Spring Conference of the Iowa Association of Medical Staff Services** (Ames, IA, April 4). Staff will speak about the NPDB and the Proactive Disclosure Service Prototype (PDS).

**New Jersey State Association of Medical Staff Services Meeting (NJAMSS) Conference** (Atlantic City, NJ, April 23-24). Staff will provide information about the Data Banks and the PDS.

**New York State Association of Medical Staff Services (NYSAMSS) Conference** (Albany, NY, April 24-25). Staff will speak about Data Bank operations and innovations.

**Pennsylvania State Association of Medical Staff Services (PAMSS)** (Erie, PA, April 30-May 2). Staff will provide information on NPDB, HIPDB, the PDS, and Section 1921.

## Section 1921: What it Means for Hospitals, State Licensing Boards, and Private Accreditation Organizations

The Data Banks anticipate that the final rules implementing Section 1921 of the *Social Security Act* will be approved soon and published in the *Federal Register*. The biggest change associated with Section 1921 is that adverse licensing actions taken against all licensed health care practitioners since January 1, 1992 will be included in the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB). Examples of licensed practitioners that are subject to Section 1921 reporting requirements by the State licensing board are: chiropractors, podiatrists, pharmacists, physician assistants, optometrists, professional and paraprofessional nurses, physical therapists, respiratory therapists, and social workers.

This Section 1921 adverse licensure information, along with certain negative actions or findings taken by private accrediting organizations such as The Joint Commission, National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), URAC, and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, will be available to hospitals.

The Data Banks are in the process of developing a strategy to educate the affected entities about Section 1921. Please stay tuned for more information about the implementation date and plan.

For more information on Section 1921, see the Data Bank Web site at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov).

*Upcoming Data Bank Improvements continued from page 1*

sent to all entities that previously received the Initial Report (within a 3 year time frame). In January, IQRS users may view the changed report electronically through the IQRS, and may also elect to receive notification of the changed report via e-mail.

When the Data Banks receive a report change, all entities that received the original report will now receive an e-mail alert instructing them to log in to the IQRS and click the unviewed notice link on the *Options* screen (Figure 2) to view the changed report. Users may click the Data Bank Control Number (DCN) link to view additional details of the changed report and print a copy of the report change.

To take advantage of this time-saving feature, the Entity Data Bank Administrator should log in to the IQRS and click **Update**

**Notification Preferences** on the *Administrator Options* screen. Entity Data Bank Administrators are required to specify their e-mail address with all profile updates. All IQRS entity accounts with e-mail addresses will be configured, by default, to receive e-mailed notifications. Entities that wish to discontinue the receipt of paper reports should check the box in the Paper Notifications section on the *Notification Preferences* screen, so that they will no longer receive paper copies.

If a user chooses not to receive the paper copy of the report, the user will complete the certification of their request and then the entity will no longer receive paper Report Change Notifications.

Entity users may also update their notification preferences

from the *Options* screen to receive electronic notification of important Data Bank events. Click **Update User Account** on the *Options* screen and select the box to begin receiving electronic notifications of events.

### ONE-PAGE PROACTIVE DISCLOSURE SERVICE PROTOTYPE (PDS) ENROLLMENT CONFIRMATIONS

PDS enrollment confirmations are now condensed to fit on one printed page. Current PDS users suggested this change and the Data Banks are happy to announce the implementation of this feature and reduce the amount of paper used to print enrollment confirmations.

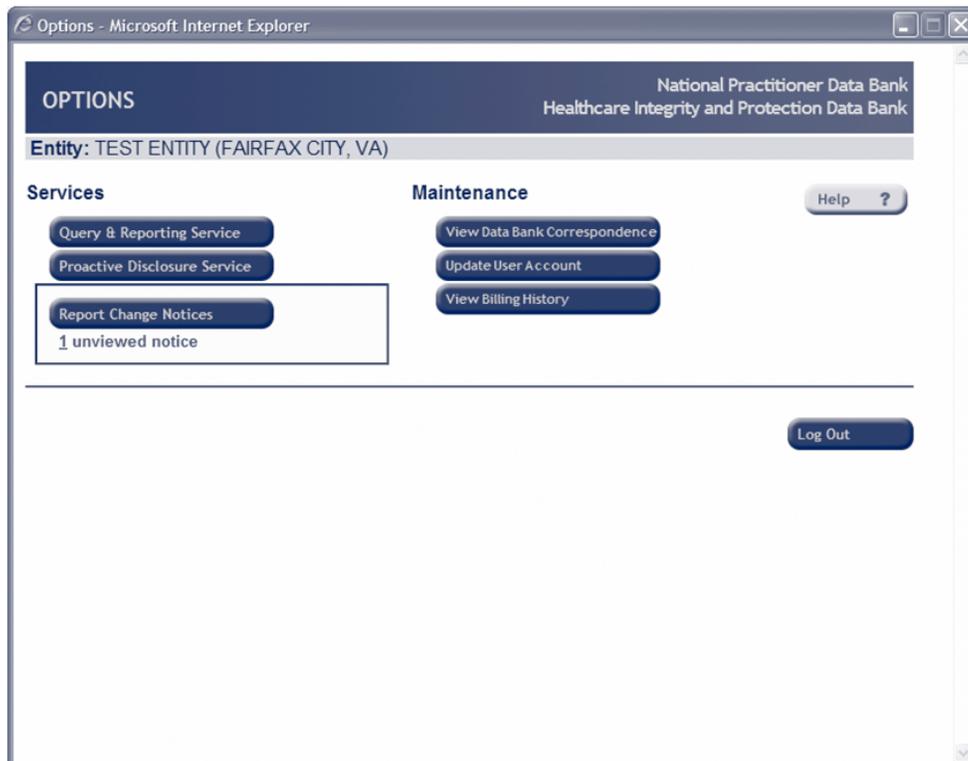


Figure 2. The Options screen displays a link for unviewed report change notices.

# Security Hints from the Data Banks

All National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB) users are responsible for preventing the disclosure of sensitive Data Bank information to unauthorized individuals. Accidental or unintentional release of sensitive information is a breach of confidentiality requirements. Entities are encouraged to have internal guidelines in place to control the use of sensitive information. Examples of NPDB-HIPDB sensitive information include: Entity Registration Verification Documents, Temporary Records of Submission, Report Verification Documents, and query results. Anything containing identifying information such as Data Bank Identification Numbers (DBIDs), Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) account numbers, credit card numbers, or Social Security numbers is considered sensitive information.

The following procedures will help prevent unauthorized disclosures:

- Sensitive information must never be left unattended, even temporarily. When visitors are present, place sensitive documents out of sight, and close any revealing computer screens.
- Remove sensitive information from desks, printers, copy machines, and computer screens after business hours. At the end of the day, store sensitive information in a secure area.

Dispose of sensitive information properly:

- Paper documents should be cross-cut shredded before disposal.
- Digital media (CDs, flash drives, tapes, diskettes, hard drives, etc.) should be sanitized or destroyed before disposal.

Transmit sensitive information securely:

- Information transmitted via e-mail should be password protected and encrypted using 128-bit Advanced Encryption Standards (AES).
- Information stored on digital media should be password protected and encrypted using 128-bit AES.
- Never fax sensitive information.

Transport sensitive information securely:

- Data delivered via U.S. Postal Service or courier should be placed in a safety-sealed envelope and labeled "Confidential Information To Be Opened by Addressee Only."

## Helpful Hints From

### ENTITY DATA BANK ADMINISTRATOR ACCOUNTS: LIMITED TO ADMINISTRATOR ACTIVITIES ONLY

Each entity has two types of accounts that can access the Data Banks: an Entity Data Bank Administrator account and a unique user account for each staff member authorized to query, report, or enroll practitioners in the Proactive Disclosure Service Prototype (PDS). The Entity Data Bank Administrator account is now restricted to processing administrative tasks; updating and renewing entity registrations, creating user accounts, resetting users' passwords, and designating agents. The Entity Data Bank Administrator's account cannot be used to submit queries, reports, or enroll PDS subjects.

Entity Data Bank Administrators who query, report, and/or enroll practitioners in the PDS, in addition to

their administrator functions, must create a unique user account for themselves in order to access the query and report functions.

### REVISION TO ACTION REPORTS

A Revision to Action Report is filed when an action is taken that relates to and/or modifies an adverse action previously reported to the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB). The entity that reports the initial adverse action must also report any revision to that action. A reportable Revision to Action Report includes a modification of a professional review action or reinstatement of clinical privileges, a license, or a professional society membership. When submitting a Revision to Action Report, the reporter must use the Data Bank Control Number (DCN) of the report being modified.

# National Evaluation of the NPDB-HIPDB

Your participation may soon be requested in a survey of the National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB).

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration is conducting a national evaluation of its Data Banks. Periodically, an evaluation of each Data Bank is conducted to measure user satisfaction, the utility of the information, and to obtain suggestions for improving the Data Banks.

The Practitioner Data Banks Branch (PDBB) contracted with The Gallup Organization to conduct this comprehensive evaluation. The evaluation consists of the following three main components:

- Reporting questionnaire: to gather feedback on the process of reporting malpractice payments and adverse actions to the NPDB and the HIPDB.
- Querying questionnaire: to gather feedback on the process of querying on practitioners.

- Matching questionnaire: to gather feedback on the usefulness of the matched reports your entity receives on queried practitioners.

You may be asked to provide contact information for the individuals on your staff who are the most qualified to provide feedback on each of the components that are applicable to your organization. Once these individuals are identified, Gallup will send e-mail invitations that will allow them to complete Web-based surveys.

The evaluation is conducted on a secure Web site under the strict confidentiality protections of the *Federal Privacy Act* and NPDB-HIPDB regulations concerning confidentiality of information.

If you are contacted by Gallup, please participate in the survey. Your answers will help improve the Data Banks for all users.

## The Data Banks

### 365 DAYS—24/7 CONTINUOUS MONITORING

Did you know that you can receive Data Bank queries of your health care practitioners? All entities that query the Data Banks are invited to participate in the PDS. Entities may sign up on-line on the *PDS Participation* screen located on the Data Bank Web site at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov). Sign up today and stay informed with real-time report notifications on your practitioners.

### CLICK LOG OUT WHEN EXITING THE IQRS

When you are ready to end your Integrated Querying Reporting Service (IQRS) session, be sure to click the new **Log Out** button that appears on every IQRS Web screen.

If you do not use the **Log Out** button to exit the IQRS, and you log back in within 20 minutes, you will receive a warning screen indicating that another user is logged in to the IQRS using your log on information.

### DON'T SHARE USER ACCOUNTS!

To prevent users from sharing accounts, the IQRS terminates multiple concurrent sessions. Every entity user is required to have a unique user ID and password to log in to the IQRS. Users will receive an error message to alert them when someone else logs in with their user ID and password.

## Enroll Subjects in the PDS with Ease

If you are a Proactive Disclosure Service Prototype (PDS) subscriber, you can use the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS) subject database to enroll your practitioners and update your enrollments in the PDS.

When enrolling practitioners in the PDS, you can import some or all of your practitioners from your IQRS subject database into the PDS. Doing so automatically transfers your imported subject(s) from your IQRS subject database, so there is no risk of inadvertently querying on practitioners already enrolled and monitored in the PDS. These subjects may be moved back to your IQRS subject database if, for some reason, you remove the practitioners from the PDS.

The subject database offers a way to keep track of subject identifying information (e.g., Social Security number, date of birth, street address). Importing subject data into the PDS via the subject database eliminates the need for you to re-type subject data, and serves as a time-saving alternative to manually adding and maintaining your subject information in the PDS. You can use an electronic interface to import large amounts of subject information from your corporate system into either your subject database for IQRS querying and reporting or for the PDS.

To enroll a subject from the IQRS subject database into the PDS, click **Enroll New Subjects** on the *Proactive Disclosure Service* screen. On the *Enroll New PDS Subjects* screen, click **Enroll From Subject Database**. On the *Enroll Stored Subjects* screen, select the

subject names that you wish to enroll. For ease in viewing, you may sort on-screen subjects by name, subject ID, Social Security number, department, and/or date of last query. When all your desired subjects are highlighted, click **Select Subjects**. Once you have selected subjects and a payment method (Electronic Funds Transfer, new credit card, or a credit card on file), a *Temporary Enrollment Confirmation* screen displays the PDS enrollments that you submitted to the Data Banks. Enrollment confirmations are available electronically within 2 to 4 hours of receipt by the Data Bank(s).

You may update subjects enrolled in the PDS by clicking **Manage Subjects** on the *Proactive Disclosure Service* screen. On the *Manage Subjects* screen, select the name of the subject to update. Click **Update Subject** on the *Subject Details* screen, update the subject information, and click **Submit to Data Banks**. Minor updates are processed immediately. If your update is significant (i.e., name, Social Security number, licensure information), the *Interim Update Confirmation* screen displays, noting that your update will be processed within 2 to 4 hours. At that time, you can retrieve the final enrollment update confirmation. Under certain circumstances, additional processing time may be required.

For more information on the PDS, click the FAQ link on the Data Bank home page, located at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov), then click the PDS link located on the left hand side of the screen.

## Dear Data Banks...

**T**his column answers questions about the Data Banks' policies and procedures. **If you have a question, please write to Dear Data Banks at P.O. Box 10832, Chantilly, VA 20153-0832 or e-mail your question to Dear Data Banks at [npdb-hipdb@sra.com](mailto:npdb-hipdb@sra.com).** We look forward to hearing from you!

**Q**uestion: If a hospital reviews a surgeon's professional competence and assigns a surgical proctor for 60 days, and the surgeon cannot perform surgery without being granted approval by the surgical proctor, is the action reportable to the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB)?

**A**nswer: Yes, because the surgeon cannot practice surgery without the approval of the surgical proctor, the action constitutes a restriction on the practitioner's clinical privileges and must be reported to the NPDB.

**Q**uestion: How long are my query responses available on the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS)?

**A**nswer: Query responses are available for you to download from the IQRS for 45 days from the date the query is processed. You must retrieve responses within that time frame. If you wish to save query responses beyond the 45-day period, you must save them to your computer or print them.

**Q**uestion: Can I designate more than one authorized agent to query for my hospital?

**A**nswer: Yes. To designate one or more authorized agents to query for your hospital, the Entity Data Bank Administrator should log in to the IQRS and click **Administrator Options** on the *Registration Confirmation* screen. Click **Maintain Agent Information** on the *Administrator*

*Options* screen, click **Add** on the *Agent Information* screen, and complete all fields on the *Designate Authorized Agent* screen. After your Entity Data Bank Administrator certifies the information and clicks **Continue**, a formatted copy of the Agent Designation Request will display, which should be printed for your entity's records. Your Entity Data Bank Administrator should then notify the authorized agent's administrator to log in to the IQRS to accept this request.

**If you have a question, please call the Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732. Information Specialists are available to speak with you weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (5:30 p.m. on Fridays) Eastern Time. The Customer Service Center is closed on all Federal holidays.**

## Reporting Codes

The Data Banks are currently reviewing the code lists for the National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB). These lists include data field codes for Medical Malpractice Payment Reports, Adverse Action Reports, State Licensure Action Reports, and Judgment or Conviction Reports. They encompass Basis for Action codes, Act or Omission codes, and Specific Allegations codes. The Data Banks are also looking at Type of Organization codes, Specialty codes, and Field of Licensure codes. If you are the reporter for an entity, and you have suggestions for additions or clarifications to these codes, please send them to the Data Banks at [PolicyAnalysis@hrsa.gov](mailto:PolicyAnalysis@hrsa.gov). Your ideas will help ensure that reports submitted to the Data Banks are complete, clear, and thorough.

## Upcoming QRXS Improvements!

Users of the Querying and Reporting XML Service (QRXS) will be able to use the QRXS for querying beginning June 16, 2008. In addition, Data Bank Correspondence and Report Change Notifications will be provided via the QRXS on March 31, 2008. The QRXS interface is ideal for large volume reporters who benefit from using their own transaction processing systems for interfacing with the Data Banks and desire a more flexible and more easily tested interface.

## On the Horizon

### ELECTRONIC DATA BANK NEWSLETTER

The Data Bank newsletter, *NPDB-HIPDB Data Bank News*, is available on-line at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/newsletter.html](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/newsletter.html). Entities may choose to discontinue receiving the paper copy of the newsletter by calling the Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732, and requesting that the Data Banks automatically e-mail them as soon as the newsletter is available. Entities that wish to continue receiving the newsletter in paper format do not need to do anything, as they will continue to receive a paper copy.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES

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