



# NPDB-HIPDB DATA BANK NEWS



National Practitioner Data Bank—Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank

JULY 2007

## PDS Prototype Is Here!

**T**he Data Banks' Proactive Disclosure Service (PDS) Prototype went on-line May 1, 2007. PDS offers health care providers, such as hospitals, managed care organizations, and medical groups, the opportunity to continuously monitor practitioners. It gives users the ability to access information, 24/7, 365 days a year without initiating a query. **You will never need to query on your practitioners once you enroll them in PDS.**

To celebrate the opening of PDS, the Practitioner Data Banks Branch (PDBB) held a PDS Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on April 30, 2007. Guests included representatives from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) Executive Committee, and several registered entities, such as the Johns Hopkins Centralized Verification Office and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. A Johns Hopkins representative enrolled the first practitioner in PDS and demonstrated how easy the enrollment process is.

PDS satisfies many credentialing requirements of health care organizations, and meets the mandatory hospital querying requirements of the *Health Care Quality Improvement Act of 1986*, as amended.

The annual enrollment cost is \$3.25 per practitioner, per Data Bank. In 2004, the Data Banks conducted research on the querying patterns of hospitals and other health care entities. The research showed that on average, entities query more frequently on their practitioners than once every two or three years, depending on the length of their re-credentialing cycle. Therefore, the total cost for PDS enrollment for a two-year period should be close to the total average cost of individual queries, based on typical querying patterns. Since manual submission of queries would no longer be necessary, entities could potentially save querying labor costs.

For more information on how to enroll your practitioners in the PDS Prototype, see the PDS Web page at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pds.html](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pds.html).

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## Upcoming Data Bank Outreach Activities

**R**epresentatives from the Practitioner Data Banks Branch (PDBB) will participate in a variety of outreach activities to share Data Bank information, learn from health care community experts and associations, and talk with Data Bank users about their concerns.

### August

- National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN) Annual Meeting (Chicago, IL, August 7-10).
- National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) Meeting (Reno, NV, August 14-15).

See Data Bank Outreach Activities on page 3

## New and Updated Adverse Action Codes

Beginning in August 2007, additional and slightly revised adverse action codes will be available for users of the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS), the Interface Control Document (ICD) Transfer Program (ITP), and the Querying and Reporting XML Service (QRXS). A few of the adverse action codes were slightly revised for consistency and clarity. The new codes will affect Clinical Privileges Reports and Federal and State Licensure Reports.

Two new Clinical Privileges adverse action codes will be added. They are:

- Code 1634 - Voluntary Limitation, Restriction, or Reduction of Clinical Privilege(s), While Under, or to Avoid, Investigation Relating to Professional Competence or Conduct. This code will be available for use in Clinical Privileges Revisions to Action Reports as well as in Clinical Privileges Initial Reports.
- Code 1639 - Summary or Emergency Limitation, Restriction, or Reduction of Clinical Privileges.

Two additional codes will be added to the State Licensure Actions. They are not limited to Nurse actions only but are available for actions taken against Licensed Practitioners. They are:

- Code 1138 - Summary or Emergency Limitation or Restriction on License. Code 1138 is only available for National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) actions because the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) does not accept an action unless it is a final adverse action.
- Code 1146 - Voluntary Limitation or Restriction on License. Code 1146 may be used in State Licensure Revision to Action Reports as well as in Licensure Initial Action Reports.

Federal and State licensure codes will be separated into their own categories rather than combined into one large grouping. The reason for this change is to make it easier to navigate the additional State licensure codes. The Practitioner Data Banks Branch (PDBB) worked with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) to develop a category of adverse action codes that reflect actions taken by State Boards of Nursing that are part of the Nurse Licensure Compact. In these States, a Registered Nurse or a Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse is granted a license in the Home State or State of Residency and is granted the privilege or authority to practice nursing in any Compact State. The Home/Residency State, as well as the Compact State, may take an adverse action against the nurse. The Home/Residency State will continue to use the State licensure adverse action code list; however, a new category of adverse action codes called "Multi-State Privilege Actions" was developed for the Compact State actions. The actions listed in the Multi-State Privilege Actions Code List are similar to the State licensure adverse action codes but are worded specifically for actions against the Nurse Multi-State Privilege. These action codes will only be available to State Licensing Boards.†

*Data Bank Outreach Activities continued from page 1*

## September

- Council on Licensure Enforcement and Regulation Annual Conference (CLEAR) (Atlanta, GA, September 6-8).
- Texas Licensing Boards Meeting (Austin, TX, September 10).
- South Dakota Association of Medical Staff Services Conference (Sioux Falls, SD, September 19-21).
- Administrators In Medicine (AIM) Eastern & Southern Regional Meeting (Williamsburg, VA, September 27-28).
- National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB) Policy Forum (New York, NY, September 30). If you are interested in attending the forum, contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732. Please note that attendance is limited.
- National Association Medical Staff Services Annual Conference (New York, NY, September 29-October 3).

If your organization has an upcoming event that would benefit from PDBB participation, please contact us with your request at [npdb-hipdb@sra.com](mailto:npdb-hipdb@sra.com). On the subject line, specify "PDBB meeting participation request." Be sure to include your organization's name, event description, location, date(s), contact name, and phone number in your request. ¶

## Recent Data Bank Improvements

In June, the Data Banks launched system enhancements to improve the quality and integrity of the data submitted in a report. These changes affect the Integrated Querying and Reporting Services (IQRS) and the Interface Control Document (ICD) Transfer Program (ITP). The changes are briefly described below.

Reporters now have the capability to make Corrections to Revision to Action Reports within the IQRS. This improvement saves time as the reporter no longer has to void the Revision to Action Report and then submit a new Initial Report. ITP reporters cannot submit Corrections to Revision to Action Reports through the ITP, however they may submit Corrections to Revision to Action Reports through the IQRS. Also, ITP users are able to view Corrections to Revision to Action Reports in their query responses.

Another improvement to both the IQRS and the ITP is in the narrative description subject statement fields. The narrative description and subject statement fields may now contain up to 4,000 characters so that the reporter can provide more detailed information. The on-screen text area was enlarged, enabling users to see more of the narrative and statement text. A character counter, also recently added, helps track the number of characters used in the narrative description or subject statement. Another new feature is that

Section A on all reports was expanded to include the reporting entity's most recent name and address and successor entity information. This enhancement provides queriers and practitioners with access to the most current contact information for the reporting entity. The original entity report contact information will remain unchanged on the report, but, as entity information changes over the years, the new data will be updated.

Report responses submitted through the IQRS include a notice regarding whether or not the report was submitted within the statutory timeframe of 30 days. This same reporting timeframe compliance notice now displays on ITP report responses as well as on the IQRS report responses.

IQRS and ITP users may now select the action of an automatic reinstatement "if conditions are met" when submitting Adverse Action Reports to the Data Bank(s). Previously the only choice was to specify whether or not the reinstatement was automatic.

The Data Banks are always receptive to new ideas that assist users with meeting querying and reporting obligations. If you have a helpful idea that may improve Data Bank operations, please contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732. ¶

## User Satisfaction Survey

The Practitioner Data Banks Branch (PDBB) has contracted with the Gallup Organization to conduct a user satisfaction survey of National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) users. This is the latest in a series of user satisfaction surveys conducted about every five years. Many entities participated in previous surveys, and the results have proved beneficial in creating design improvements to ensure that the Data Banks meet the user needs.

The new survey will measure user satisfaction with the Data Banks' information and processes, learn how information supplied by the Data Banks is being used, and glean ideas on how we might improve the Data Banks. The Gallup Organization will contact randomly selected registered entities by

telephone to verify contact information and ask them to take part in the survey by accessing a secure Web page and responding to questions. In some cases, entities that query the Data Bank(s) will be asked to provide feedback about how they used information received in specific responses to queries. If you are selected for the survey, we urge you to participate. Your answers will help us improve the Data Banks for all users.

Pretesting the survey instruments began in June. The full survey will begin in August. If you have specific questions or concerns about the survey, you can contact Dr. Robert Oshel, PDBB, at 301-443-2300, or [policyanalysis@hrsa.gov](mailto:policyanalysis@hrsa.gov).

# Helpful Hints From

## DELETE USER ACCOUNTS WHEN EMPLOYEES LEAVE

**Entity administrators:** You are responsible for keeping your user accounts current. When an employee retires, transfers to another department within your organization, is terminated, or quits, you must delete the user account for security purposes. If you leave the organization, be sure to assign another administrator before you go.

## HISTORICAL QUERY AND REPORT SUMMARIES

Do you need to know how many queries or reports your entity has submitted? Do you want to verify that you actually queried or reported on an individual? The Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS) historical query and report feature enables you to obtain a summary of previously queried or reported subjects. The history is provided according to the

search criteria that you specify on screen. Searches may be performed dating back to June 2000, but the date range selected for general searches (searches without specifying a subject name) must not exceed a one-year period. To access your entity's historical report and query information, log in to IQRS located on the Data Banks home page and click **Continue** on the *Registration Confirmation* screen. Follow the on-screen instructions for historical querying and reporting, making sure to specify your search criteria. Click **Continue** to view the results of your search. You may also print your search results.

## LOCKED OUT OF THE IQRS?

You may find yourself locked out of the IQRS if your password has expired, if you changed your password but did not save it properly, or if you made five consecutive unsuccessful attempts to login. If you are

## Is Your Narrative Sufficient?

In order to meet the statutory reporting requirements, reporters of Adverse Action Reports must provide a legally sufficient narrative description. Narratives must include enough information to enable a knowledgeable reviewer to determine clearly the circumstances of the action(s) or surrender—i.e., a clear understanding of the allegations, the nature of the action taken, and the reasons for the report.

Here are some general tips to ensure you meet the requirements:

- Use statements of facts, and avoid prescriptive, inflammatory, or emotive language.
- Include a description of the process used to take the action, especially if it will help the reviewer understand the circumstances of the action.
- Fully explain general terms and citations.

Tips for providing a meaningful narrative relative to the Adverse Action Classification codes:

- Remember that the narrative must describe and explain what action or actions were taken — what the entity did.
- Provide a narrative that supports the code used and further describes the action.
- Describe the relationships between multiple Adverse Action Classification codes, if applicable.

- Include a description of additional Adverse Action Classification codes if more than five actions were taken in the same decision or order.

Tips for providing a meaningful narrative relative to the Basis for Action codes:

- Remember that the narrative must also describe and explain why the entity took the action or actions — what the practitioner did that led the entity to take action.
- Provide a narrative that supports the codes and further describes the events of the action.
- Include the name and a description of other Bases for Action codes if you wish to list more than five Basis for Action codes.

Use the narrative to provide an explanation beyond what is understood from the reporting codes. Do not simply repeat the language of the codes. Up to 4,000 characters may be used to provide as much detail as you think a reader would need in order to understand what your entity did and why it was done.

For examples of legally sufficient narratives, see the *Fact Sheet on Developing Legally Sufficient Narratives for Adverse Action Reports*, located on-line at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pubs/fs/Fact\\_Sheet-AAR\\_Legal\\_Sufficiency.pdf](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pubs/fs/Fact_Sheet-AAR_Legal_Sufficiency.pdf).<sup>¶</sup>

## The Data Banks

the entity IQRS administrator, an IQRS error message will advise you to contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732 for assistance. If you are not the entity IQRS administrator, an error message will advise you to contact your entity IQRS administrator to reset your user password.

If you are the entity IQRS administrator and wish to reset a user's password, highlight the user's account information on the *Maintain User Account Information* screen and click **Reset Password**. Resetting a user's password will create a system-generated, temporary password for the user. This password is valid for three calendar days. The user must log in to the IQRS to change this temporary password and create a new password. The new password may not be a previously used password, and may not be a word found in the dictionary. The new password is case-sensitive and must be 8 to 14 characters in length, and must include a mix of letters and numbers.

### USING THE QUERYING AND REPORTING XML SERVICE (QRXS)

The QRXS is an alternative to the IQRS and is ideal for large-volume reporters who benefit from using their own information systems for interfacing with the Data Bank(s) and desire a more flexible and more easily tested interface with the National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB). This service is currently available for reporting only. The QRXS uses eXtensible Markup Language (XML). The advantage of using the QRXS for reporters is that it verifies the report format automatically. Reporters do not have to submit transactions and wait for validation responses from the NPDB-HIPDB system. The XML technology also enables a more flexible interface with the NPDB-HIPDB.<sup>¶</sup>

## Security Hints from the Data Banks: Safe E-mail Practices

E-mail messages have the potential to corrupt files and expose personal information on computer hard drives to strangers. E-mails often contain graphics, pictures, links, and scripts which make the message more attractive, but they may also contain hidden side effects such as phishing or malware. Phishing is the act of sending an e-mail (or other communication) to a user claiming to be a legitimate business in an attempt to obtain a user's private information. The e-mail directs the user to visit a Web site where he or she is asked to update personal information, such as password, credit card, social security, and bank account numbers. The Web site, however, is fraudulent and is established only to procure the user's information. (The Data Banks will never send an e-mail requesting your identifying information.) Malware is hostile, intrusive, or annoying software or program code designed to infiltrate or harm a computer system without the owner's informed consent. Implementing safe e-mail practices can help protect your computer and keep your information private.

Here are some hints to protect your inbox:

1. Do not open e-mail attachments from someone you do not know. Only open attachments if you know who they are from and what they are about.
2. Attachments that have the following file extensions should not be opened because they are typically found in viruses and can carry executable instructions: .bat, .vbs, .shs, .pif, or .scn.
3. Install and keep current high-quality anti-virus, anti-spyware, and anti-spam software.
4. Limit unwanted junk and spam e-mails by activating the junk e-mail filters in Microsoft Outlook or a similar function in other e-mail providers.
5. Immediately apply operating system patches and updates when available. Ensure your computer's automatic update is turned on and that you download the latest critical updates and security updates.
6. Be cautious about clicking on links within e-mails. It is always better to close the e-mail and access Web sites directly.
7. Don't click an "unsubscribe from this list" link in an e-mail message. Often this can confirm your e-mail address, resulting in the selling of your e-mail address to other spammers (resulting in receiving more spam). If you do not want the e-mail, mark it as junk and delete it.

Implementing these tips will help keep your computer safe and running smoothly.¶

## Dear Data Banks...

**T**his column answers questions you may have about Data Banks policy and procedures. If you have a question about how the Data Banks work, 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!

**Question:** How do I find out if I submitted a duplicate query?

**Answer:** If you are unsure about a specific query, check the *View Query Response* screen to see whether the query is listed multiple times. You can also verify on the *View Query Response* screen whether the query in question is pending, completed, or rejected. If the query is not shown, then it was not submitted.

If you submit a query or a report and do not see a Temporary Record of Submission or a Query Confirmation for that submission within one minute, do not click **Submit to Data Bank(s)** again. Clicking the **Submit to Data Bank(s)** button multiple times will generate multiple fees for the same query or multiple submissions of the same report. Instead, check the *View Query Response* screen to determine the status of the query. You may also contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732.

**Question:** Are there instances in which my organization would need two Data Bank Identification Numbers (DBIDs)?

**Answer:** Most registered entities require only one DBID but, in limited situations, an entity may obtain additional DBIDs. Remember that a unique DBID is issued based on meeting the statutory and regulatory definitions of the specific type of entity (i.e., hospital, other health care entity, health plan).

One example is when an entity that is eligible to query both the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) wants to query different Data Banks for different types of practitioners. The entity could establish separate registrations with different query preferences. For example, the entity might want to query both Data Banks for physicians but query only the HIPDB for nurses. All queries submitted under one of the

registrations would automatically go to both the NPDB and the HIPDB, while queries submitted using the other registration's DBID would automatically go to only the HIPDB.

Let's look at another example. A health plan which operates nationally queries on all its practitioners, but each of the plan's regional offices has complete responsibility for credentialing practitioners within its region. Each regional office must register separately and obtain its own DBID. The various regional offices cannot share information received from the NPDB or HIPDB even if a practitioner is on the health plan's staff in more than one region. By way of contrast, if the plan had a single national unified medical staff, then the plan could have a single DBID and may use user accounts for individuals in the regional offices. In the example, however, each regional office is fully responsible for decision making for its own medical staff.

**Question:** If a dentist is dismissed from a medical malpractice lawsuit before a settlement is made for the benefit of the anesthesiologist, who also is named in the lawsuit, who would be reported to the NPDB?

**Answer:** The medical malpractice payment made for the benefit of the anesthesiologist is reportable. As long as the dentist was not dismissed from the lawsuit as a condition of settlement, in other words, the dentist was dismissed from the lawsuit independent of the settlement agreement, the dentist is not reportable to the NPDB.

**Question:** Are practitioners notified of a Data Bank(s) report concerning them?

**Answer:** Yes, when an Initial, Correction, Revision to Action, or Void Report is placed in the NPDB or HIPDB, the subject of the report is sent a copy of the report by mail. The copy of the report is mailed to the subject's address as provided by the reporting entity.

**If you have an urgent 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.** 🇺🇸

# National Practitioner Data Bank

## Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank

P.O. Box 10832, Chantilly, Virginia 20153-0832 • www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov

**DO YOU ACT AS AN AUTHORIZED AGENT?**

Please provide the following information **if you act as an Agent**. **Note:** If you represent multiple entities that plan to enroll in PDS, check the box below and attach entity information separately.

**Yes, I represent more than one entity that plans to enroll in PDS. I am attaching information for \_\_\_ (number of entities).**

Entity Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Entity DBID: \_\_\_\_\_

Entity Contact Name for PDS: \_\_\_\_\_

Entity Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Entity E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Practitioners That I Will Enroll in PDS for This Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

**ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

Number of Practitioners That I Will Enroll in PDS for My Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of Practitioners That I Will Enroll in PDS: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Anticipated Annual Enrollment Fee: \_\_\_\_\_ (The Number of Enrolled Practitioners x \$3.25 per Data Bank)

**PDS ACCESS METHOD**

How Do You Plan to Use the PDS?:    **IQRS**     **ITP**

Do You Plan to Use ITP Software Provided by Another Vendor?:    **Yes**     **No**

If you plan to use software provided by another vendor, please provide the vendor information below so we may assist them with questions.

Vendor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Vendor Contact Name for PDS: \_\_\_\_\_

Vendor Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**CERTIFICATION**

I agree to enroll in the NPDB-HIPDB PDS Prototype. I understand that payment must be made upon enrollment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Department/Entity Representative Signature Date

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**National Practitioner Data Bank**  
**Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank**  
P.O. Box 10832, Chantilly, Virginia 20153-0832 • www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov

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**PROACTIVE DISCLOSURE SERVICE (PDS) PROTOTYPE PARTICIPATION**

**(Please tear out and complete both pages.)**

Please complete both pages and return to: Attn: PDS Prototype Participation, NPDB-HIPDB, P.O. Box 10832, Chantilly, VA 20153-0832, or you may fax it to 703-802-4109, or you may e-mail it to [npdb-hipdb@sra.com](mailto:npdb-hipdb@sra.com). **Be sure to sign page 2 before returning to the Data Banks.**

**ORGANIZATION INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Data Bank Identification Number (DBID): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name for PDS: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Entity Type: **Hospital**  **Health Plan, MCO**  **Licensing Board**  **Other**

If you selected Other above, specify your entity type: \_\_\_\_\_

**DO YOU HAVE AN AUTHORIZED AGENT?**

Please provide the following information **if you plan to use an agent for PDS**. **Note:** If you plan to use more than one agent for PDS, check the box below and attach agent information.

**Yes, I have more than one agent. I am attaching information for \_\_\_ (number of agents).**

Agent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agent DBID: \_\_\_\_\_

Agent Contact Name for PDS: \_\_\_\_\_

Agent Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Agent E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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## On the Horizon

### REGISTRATION RENEWAL EVERY TWO YEARS

Every two years, the National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB) requires registered entities to renew their Data Bank registration and recertify their authority to participate with the Data Banks. This process ensures that entity information on file is accurate and current.

Each entity is notified in advance when it is their month to renew. Entities may renew their registrations up to 30 days before their renewal date. Check the *Registration Confirmation* screen for your entity's renewal date. It is easy to complete the renewal on-line through the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS). For more information, see the *Fact Sheet for Registration Renewal*, located on-line at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pubs/fs/Fact\\_Sheet-Registration\\_Renewal.pdf](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pubs/fs/Fact_Sheet-Registration_Renewal.pdf).

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES

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Bureau of Health Professions  
Office of Workforce Evaluation and Quality Assurance  
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