



# NPDB-HIPDB DATA BANK NEWS



National Practitioner Data Bank—Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2007

## Recent Entity/Agent Enhancements

The Data Banks are pleased to announce new entity/agent relationship enhancements that took effect on November 5, 2007. The improvements are described below:

### ENTITIES CAN SPECIFY RESPONSE ROUTING FOR AGENT-SUBMITTED TRANSACTIONS

Previously, the Entity Data Bank Administrator could only select the agent or the entity to receive query and report output. With the recent enhancements, the Entity Data Bank Administrator may choose to have the output routed to the entity, the agent, or both. In addition, entities now have the ability to select

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## The Proactive Disclosure Service Prototype (PDS): An Excellent Start!

Since the activation of the PDS Prototype on May 1, 2007, (and as of November 1, 2007), approximately 261 entities have subscribed and enrolled over 75,000 practitioners in the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and over 7,600 practitioners in the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB). PDS Prototype subscribers enjoy the benefit of continuous monitoring of their enrolled practitioners.

When a subscribing entity enrolls its practitioners in the PDS Prototype, the entity receives all past reports (equivalent to the traditional query response) on the enrolled practitioners and an enrollment confirmation, which summarizes the enrollment information. After that, the subscribing entity receives automatic continuous monitoring of its enrolled practitioners for a 12-month period of time. The continuous monitoring feature means that, when the Data Banks receive new information (a report) on an enrolled practitioner, the system alerts the subscribing entity within one day of the Data Banks' receipt of the report. It is because of this feature that the PDS Prototype meets the mandatory query requirements of the *Healthcare Quality Improvement Act of 1986*, as amended, and is supported by the Joint Commission and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) accrediting organizations as meeting their credentialing and monitoring standards.

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how they receive query and report output. For example, when an agent submits a successful query through the Interface Control Document (ICD) Transfer Program (ITP), the entity can elect to receive the query response through the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS) or the ITP.

**AGENTS CAN TERMINATE ENTITY/AGENT RELATIONSHIPS**

The recent enhancements enable agents to terminate the entity/agent relationship. Previously, only the entity could terminate the relationship. The agent may deactivate the relationship by selecting the entity and clicking **Deactivate Relationship** on the *Active Entity Relationships* screen (see Figure 1). Entities will be notified of the deactivation via Data Bank Correspondence.

**ENTITY DATA BANK ADMINISTRATORS ARE NOTIFIED IF THEIR AGENT FAILS TO RENEW ITS REGISTRATION**

Entity Data Bank Administrators are now notified when their agents fail to renew registration with the Data Banks. Agents that fail to renew their registration will be locked out of the system and will be unable to query or report for the entity. Data Bank Correspondence will alert entities to follow up with their agents to ensure the registration is renewed and the entity/agent relationship maintained.

**NEW BROWSER SUPPORTED: NETSCAPE 8.1.2**

The IQRS-supported browsers now include: Netscape 7.2, 8.0, 8.1, and 8.1.2 and Internet Explorer (IE) versions 6.0, 6.0 SP1, 6.0 SP2, and 7.0. Make sure you are using a supported browser.

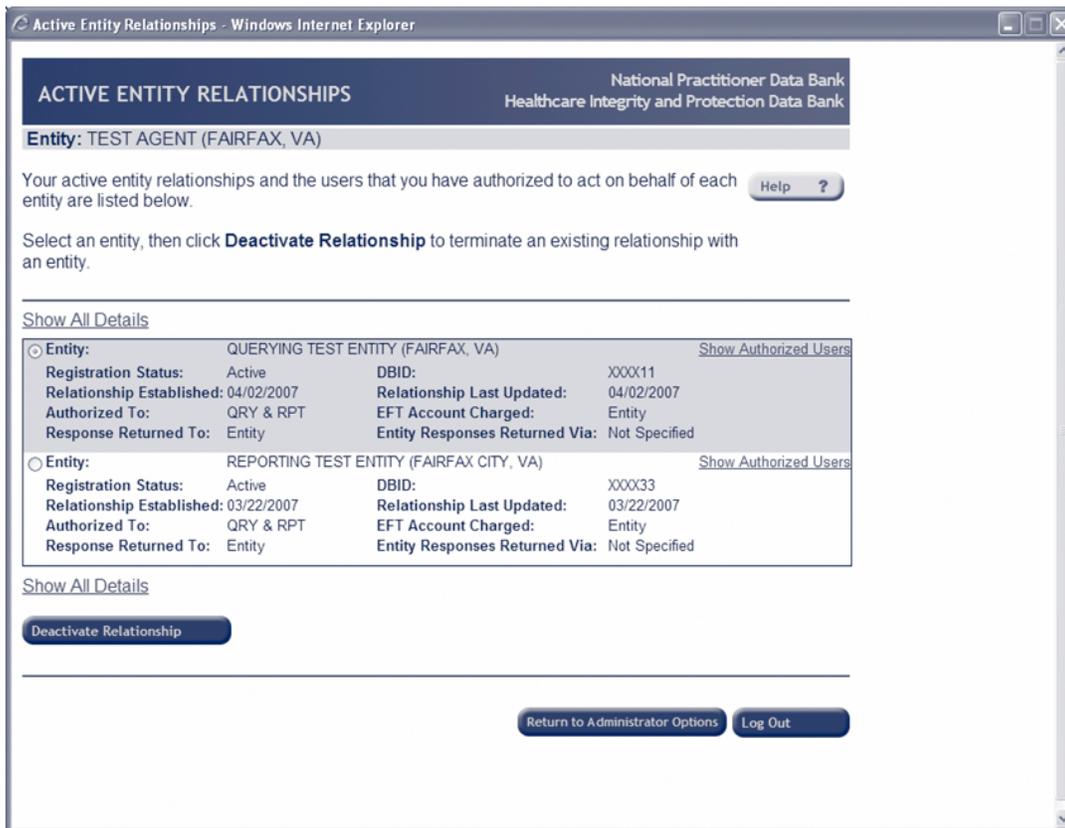


Figure 1. Agents now have the ability to deactivate a relationship with an entity by clicking **Deactivate Relationship** on the *Active Entity Relationships* screen.

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Current PDS Prototype subscribers include: Hospitals, Managed Care Organizations, Community Mental Health Centers, Community Health Centers, Ambulatory Surgery Centers, Physicians Health Organizations (PHOs), Skilled Nursing Facilities, Other Specialty Networks, and Other Health Care Service Providers. Depending on whether the entity subscribed to the NPDB, HIPDB, or both, the entities' practitioners are continuously monitored for Adverse Action Reports, State Licensure Actions, Medical Malpractice Payment Reports, and Judgment or Conviction Reports 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

As part of the PDS Prototype implementation plan, the Practitioner Data Banks Branch (PDBB) wanted to know what the subscribers thought about the PDS Prototype. In late June 2007, PDBB conducted several conference calls with subscribers who had enrolled practitioners in the PDS Prototype. PDBB was able to ascertain information about subscribers' level of satisfaction with the service and collect empirical information on the PDS Prototype process from pre-enrollment to enrollment cancellations to report disclosure notices.

Generally, the subscribers reported finding the PDS Prototype enrollment process fast and easy. There were no problems printing enrollment confirmations and most entities enrolled all of their practitioners at once (instead of staggering enrollment). Several subscribers were amazed at how quickly the confirmations were returned. Additional staff was not required to complete the PDS Prototype enrollment process. Further, subscribers reported that the continuous monitoring feature will save their organizations time and make the reappointment process less cumbersome.

Some subscribers, who needed to cancel a practitioner's enrollment because of an error or because of a practitioner's resignation, found the cancellation process to be simple and user-friendly.

(Please note that enrolled practitioners must be cancelled when they are no longer part of the organization to avoid the possibility of the subscriber receiving confidential information after

their departure.) For this reason the Data Banks encourage PDS Prototype subscribers to include the step of cancelling a practitioner's PDS Prototype enrollment to their checklist of actions when practitioners depart from their organizations.

In anticipation of the end of the 12-month enrollment period, the Data Banks will send PDS Prototype subscribers an e-mail notification reminding them to renew their practitioners' PDS Prototype enrollments 60 days before the enrollments expire. Timely enrollment renewals ensure continuous monitoring of the practitioners without a lapse in service.

Also, it is essential for subscribers to keep their PDS Prototype contact information current to ensure the receipt of renewal notices, report disclosures, and other important PDS Prototype correspondence.

Several subscribers (who participated in the conference calls) already received a notice of a new report on an enrolled practitioner. These organizations found the report retrieval process trouble-free and reported receiving the report disclosure notice within eight hours of the Data Banks receipt of the report.

The PDS Prototype will assist organizations in making credentialing decisions on a more timely basis. In order to take full advantage of PDS Prototype's more expedient delivery of information, some subscribers reported developing new procedures to process PDS Prototype information and take the necessary action to ensure the optimal level of quality health care.

Finally, we asked subscribers to tell us opportunities for improvements that they identified from using the PDS Prototype. While they were very satisfied with the PDS Prototype, they did offer some suggestions for improvement. We are currently reviewing these suggestions.

There is still time for you to subscribe to this excellent service! Sign up today by reviewing the PDS Prototype invitation information, located at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pubs/PDS\\_Invitation\\_Information.pdf](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pubs/PDS_Invitation_Information.pdf).<sup>¶</sup>

## Data Bank Outreach Activities

Representatives from the Practitioner Data Bank Branch (PDBB) continue to 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.

**National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)** (Reno, NV, August 17). The NBCC is involved in counselor credentialing, including developing the examinations used by each of the States that license counselors. State board administrators and directors from each of the 48 States that license counselors, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico were invited to the meeting. The Data Banks provided information about Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) reporting requirements, compliance, and violations.

**South Dakota Association of Healthcare Organizations (SDAHO) Convention** (Sioux Falls, SD, September 19-21). South Dakota Administration Medical Staff Services (SDAMSS) presented a special breakout session on the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB).

**NPDB-HIPDB Policy Forum and Annual National Association Medical Staff Services (NAMSS) Conference** (New York, NY, September 30-October 3). The Policy Forum convened before the start of the 31st Annual NAMSS conference, on September 30. NAMSS members who attended the Policy Forum received four Continuing

Education Units (CEUs). The Forum was designed for individuals who submit queries and reports to the NPDB and the HIPDB. Topics covered in the Forum included existing policies that generate frequent questions; the current status of Section 1921; the Proactive Disclosure Service Prototype (PDS); compliance with statutory reporting requirements; and system improvements.

Following the Forum, Data Bank representatives attended the NAMSS conference and answered questions from Data Bank users at the NPDB-HIPDB exhibit booth. The Chief of PDBB gave a presentation on the Data Banks, the PDS Prototype, Section 1921, and compliance at the conference. NAMSS members included individuals responsible for managing credentialing, privileging, practitioner/provider organizations, and regulatory compliance.

**NPDB-HIPDB Southern Regional Licensing Board Policy Forum** (Atlanta, GA, October 17-19). The Southern Regional Licensing Board Policy Forum gathered users from several southern States for a presentation and group discussions on important issues including queries, reports, coding, secretarial review, and agents. Other agenda items included:

- New Data Bank initiatives: PDS Prototype and Section 1921.
- Data Bank improvements.
- Compliance with statutory reporting requirements.

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*See Data Bank Outreach Activities on page 5*

## Helpful Hints From

### ENSURE YOUR AGENT INTERFACES WITH THE PROACTIVE DISCLOSURE SERVICE PROTOTYPE (PDS)

Some entities wish to enroll their practitioners in the PDS Prototype, but their agents, or their own third party software vendors, have not modified their software to access the PDS Prototype. If you are in this situation and are interested in subscribing to the PDS Prototype, contact your agent or software vendor to determine whether the particular software they are using interfaces with the PDS Prototype.

If the software has not been enhanced to accommodate the PDS Prototype interface, you might encourage your vendor to update it. Using the PDS Prototype enables

you to receive the benefits of obtaining credentialing information sooner, thereby establishing or enhancing your ongoing monitoring practice. Another option is for you and your agent to access the PDS Prototype through the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS).

Once your agent can interface with the PDS Prototype, it is easy to assign your agent access to the PDS Prototype. After you activate the PDS Prototype, your Entity Data Bank Administrator must update your entity/agent relationship to give permission to the agent to enroll subjects in the PDS Prototype. To do this, the Entity Data Bank Administrator must log in to the IQRS, click **Maintain Authorized Agents** on the *Administrator Options* screen, highlight an agent on the *Agent Information* screen,

*Data Bank Outreach Activities continued from page 4*

**West Virginia Association Medical Staff Services (AMSS) Fall Conference** (Martinsburg, WV, October 19). Attendees learned about the Data Banks' history, system changes, and innovations that are planned for the future. The chapter also requested more information on the new PDS Prototype.

**Indiana Licensing Board Meeting** (Indianapolis, IN, October 25) and **Indiana AMSS Fall Conference** (Indianapolis, IN, October 26). Data Bank staff provided a presentation to both organizations on Data Bank reporting and querying.

**New Mexico AMSS Fall Conference** (Albuquerque, NM, October 26). Data Banks' staff provided a presentation on the background and scope of the NPDB-HIPDB, as well as information on some of the new developments that will affect chapter members in their roles as credentialers. The attendees also learned about the PDS Prototype, Section 1921, and system changes that have been developed in response to user suggestions.

**Chicagoland Healthcare Risk Management Society (CHRMS) Meeting** (Chicago, IL, November 8-9). Staff spoke about reporting to the Data Banks and included a discussion about penalties for improper reporting.

**Virginia AMSS Fall Conference** (Richmond, VA, November 9). A member of the Data Banks' staff gave attendees information on the history of the NPDB and HIPDB and brought chapter members up-to-date on the innovations and legislation that will impact their work. The Data Banks' staff discussed the PDS Prototype and

the ramifications of Section 1921 on credentialers, as well as newly-developed system changes in the Data Banks' procedures.

**NPDB Executive Committee Meeting** (Arlington, VA, November 13). The Executive Committee meeting was held at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel. Agenda items included PDS Prototype system enhancements, user perspective of the PDS Prototype, compliance, the emergency credentialing process, an update on Section 1921 and the NPDB Executive Committee composition, a Practitioner Remediation and Enhancement Partnership (PREP 4 Patient Safety) program update, an update on Data Bank outreach and education activities for 2007-2008, the upcoming Gallup survey, and Data Bank system enhancements. The next NPDB Executive Committee Meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2008, in Arlington, VA.

**Ohio AMSS Fall Conference** (Columbus, OH, November 16). Presentation covered NPDB and HIPDB querying and reporting and new Data Bank initiatives, including PDS Prototype and Section 1921.

**National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association Annual Conference** (Anaheim, CA, December 3-8). NHCAA is interested in information on the HIPDB, and is concerned with the prevention of health care fraud and abuse as it coincides with the focus of the HIPDB. PDBB staff exhibited at the conference.

Please mark your calendars and stay tuned for meetings in the new year. ¶

# The Data Banks

and click **Edit**. On the *Designate Authorized Agent* screen, your Entity's Data Bank Administrator should click the **Proactive Disclosure Service Prototype (PDS)** box, complete the Certification section, and click **Continue**. The *Designate Authorized Agent* screen allows you to decide whether to receive PDS Prototype responses and reminders, or have them directed to your agent. You can also view and change the query response routing.

## TIMED OUT OF THE IQRS?

When you are logged in to the IQRS and have been inactive for 20 minutes or more, you will automatically be timed out of the system. To regain access to the Data Banks, simply log in again. This feature helps protect the integrity and security of the Data Banks.

## LIST OF QUERYING, REPORTING, AND REJECTION CODES

You can locate querying, reporting, and rejection codes for all Data Bank transactions on the Data Bank home page. On the left side of the Data Bank home page, under the General Information category, click **Reporting Codes** for a list of all codes.

## MORE THAN DOCTORS AND DENTISTS...

The Data Banks contain reports on all types of licensed practitioners—not just doctors and dentists—but also all allied health practitioners. For a complete list of reportable practitioners, see [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pubs/codes/Code\\_List-Occupation\\_Field\\_of\\_Licensure.pdf](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/pubs/codes/Code_List-Occupation_Field_of_Licensure.pdf). ¶

## Corrections to Revision to Action Reports

Reporters now have the capability to make Corrections to Revision to Action Reports within the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS). To correct a previously filed Revision to Action Report, simply log in to the IQRS, specify the report Data Bank Control Number (DCN) on the *Report Type* screen, click **Correct or Modify a Report**, and make the correction.

This improvement saves users time as the reporter no longer has to void the Revision to Action Report and then submit a new Revision to Action Report. Note that Interface Control Document (ICD) Transfer Program (ITP) reporters cannot submit Corrections to Revision to Action Reports through the ITP. They must submit Corrections to Revision to Action Reports through the IQRS; however, ITP users are able to view Corrections to Revision to Action Reports in their ITP query responses. ¶

## Security Hints from the Data Banks

The Data Banks implemented new security enhancements in November. The enhancements limit the Entity Data Bank Administrator account capability as well as prevent multiple users from logging in to a user account using the same user ID and password.

The security enhancements prevent fraudulent users from logging in to the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS). The enhancements also discourage users from sharing login information. In addition, they prohibit multiple users, with a single user ID, from accessing the IQRS simultaneously. Attempts to open a second session generate a warning notice. The notice displays that another user is logged in with the same user ID. The first session terminates if the second user proceeds to log in. The Data Banks permit only one concurrent session per user account for the IQRS and the Report Response Service (RRS).

The Entity Data Bank Administrator account is limited to administrative functions only. The functions include creating user accounts and changing passwords. Entity Data Bank Administrators who submit queries and reports must create a separate user account, with a unique user ID.

The new **Log Out** button appears on every IQRS and RRS screen. Users must click the **Log Out** button to terminate a session. The user receives a logout confirmation after clicking the **Log Out** button. Failure to terminate a session properly generates a warning message. The user cannot log in again until the previous session times-out.

The Query and Report Input sessions time-out after two hours. Any data entered to that point will not be lost. The system allows the user to log in to continue a timed-out session. **Note:** The user will have until midnight to continue to work in the session that timed-out. ¶

## Dear Data Banks...

**T**his column answers questions about Data Bank policy 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: A practitioner that I enrolled in the Proactive Disclosure Service Prototype (PDS) will be leaving my organization. Do I need to cancel the subject immediately or should I just not renew the subject at the time of renewal?

**A**nswer: You must cancel any PDS Prototype enrollment immediately upon receiving notice that the subject has left your organization. Failure to cancel enrollment of a subject that is no longer part of your organization could result in a violation of the confidentiality provisions of the *Health Care Quality Improvement Act of 1986*, as amended, and may result in a civil money penalty. The *Privacy Act* also includes penalties for confidentiality breaches of Data Bank information.

**Q**uestion: How long does a report remain on file with the Data Banks? Does it ever get removed?

**A**nswer: A report remains on file with the Data Banks permanently unless it is voided or corrected by the reporting entity or the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. When a report is corrected, the original report is no longer available; however, the corrected report is available to queriers. A report may be voided only if it was erroneously submitted, if it was not required to be filed, or the action is reversed because the original action should never have been taken (e.g., overturned or appealed).

**Q**uestion: What is the deadline for submitting a Medical Malpractice Payment Report (MMPR)?

**A**nswer: Medical malpractice payers are required to report a payment within 30 days from the date the payment was made.

**Q**uestion: If a State licensing board submits an Initial Adverse Action Report to the Data Bank(s) for suspending a physician's license for 90 days, and the suspension is later reduced to 45 days, what type of report should the board submit for this new action?

**A**nswer: The State licensing board should submit a Revision to Action Report to reflect the subsequent reduction in the number of suspension days.

**Q**uestion: An individual in my organization needs access to the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS). Should I share my user ID and password?

**A**nswer: No, you should never share your user ID and password. All authorized users of the Data Banks must log in to the system by entering a unique user ID and password. Advise the individual to discuss his or her request with the Entity Data Bank Administrator. Only the Entity Data Bank Administrator can create a unique user ID and password for him or her.

Each user is responsible for protecting his or her user ID and password. If unauthorized users access the National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB) through your user account, the activities will be traced to you. Therefore, it is important that you keep your user ID and password confidential at all times—do not share this information with anyone. If you suspect that your account has been compromised, change your password and contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732.

It is the responsibility of each registered Entity Data Bank Administrator to ensure that his or her organization's users receive their own unique Data Bank user ID and password. Entity Data Bank Administrator login information should be used only by the Entity Data Bank Administrator and should not be shared with others.

**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.**

# On the Horizon

## IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 1921

It is anticipated that the final rules for Section 1921 of the *Social Security Act* will be published in the Federal Register in early 2008. Once published and implemented, Section 1921 will protect beneficiaries participating in the *Social Security Act's* health care programs from unfit health care practitioners and entities and improve the anti-fraud provisions of these programs. Section 1921 will add adverse actions taken against licensed allied health care practitioners and health care entities to the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB).

**Note:** In preparation for Section 1921, Interface Control Document (ICD) Transfer Program (ITP) users should look for information regarding updated ICDs three months prior to implementation. If you would like e-mail notification when new ICDs are available, sign up for the "ITP E-mail List" at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/MailingListReg.html](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/MailingListReg.html). Look for more details in the January 2008 edition of *NPDB-HIPDB Data Bank News*.

## PDF NOTIFICATIONS OF REPORT CHANGES SENT VIA E-MAIL WILL REPLACE PRINTED NOTICES

Beginning in 2008, entities that query and report through the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS), will receive Portable Document Format (PDF) notifications of report changes via e-mail. The e-mailed notices will instruct users to log in to their Data Bank account to download reports in PDF format. No confidential information will be sent by e-mail. **Note:** Entity Data Bank Administrators must keep a current e-mail address on file with the Data Banks to receive these notifications. Printed notices will not be sent through the U.S. Postal Service. If the entity's e-mail address is not up-to-date, they will not receive notice. ¶

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES

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Health Resources & Services Administration  
Bureau of Health Professions  
Office of Workforce Evaluation and Quality Assurance  
Practitioner Data Banks Branch  
Parklawn Building, Room 8-103  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Rockville, MD 20857

PRESORTED STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
TEMPLE HILLS, MD  
PERMIT NO. 4004