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2013 Hospital Outpatient Data Release Notes

Updated 3/11/2016

# Opening Statement

This release contains the 2013 hospital outpatient data. The MHDO has recently revised its policy on the assignment of geocodes. This release of data reflects this change. Please note that, by default, this and future data releases will only include county to identify the patients’ home addresses unless the additional detail is requested. The MHDO has also modified its method of assigning patient geocodes when they are provided; more information appears below.

# Facility Specific Data Notes

Included with this release is an excel document that contains records counts by facility by month, with data gaps highlighted in yellow. We estimate that the data gaps account for 5.5% of the expected volume of Outpatient visits and 1.3% of the expected volume of Emergency Room (ER) visits.

In addition to some of the data gaps listed below, you may notice that some facilities have volume fluctuations month to month that may be outside of the expected range. We do not have any additional information to explain that fluctuation at this time, but in our new hospital submission system coming online this summer, we will have a data validation that will compare volume with previous submissions which will allow us to detect potential data issues and capture explanations from facilities about fluctuation at the point of data submissions or notify them to submit missing information.

Below are some additional facility specific notes.

Facility 200001 St. Joseph’s Hospital’s data contained a large number of null records in the “Covers Period From Date (Dos1)” field. The provider confirmed that files were created with DOS1 blank and DOS2 populated. More information on issues with the “Covers Period From Date (Dos1)” field are described below.

Facility ID 200002 Miles Memorial Hospital is no longer used. Beginning in 2013 Q4, records for this entity now appear combined under LincolnHealth within Facility ID 200006 (formerly used for St. Andrews Hospital alone).

Facility 200008 Mercy Hospital is missing Q2 ER records.

Facility ID 200010 New England Rehabilitation Hospital is missing data for May. MHDO was informed by the facility that these data are no longer available.

Facility ID 200070 MaineGeneral Physician Offices notified MHDO that as of 7/2013, their physician practice data is included with the MaineGeneral outpatient data (200015 and 200039). As such data with Facility ID 200070 only appears in the data from January through June.

Facility 200072 Maine Coast Hospital informed MHDO that it is still working with its vendor to correct “substantial issues” with their data so they are unable to submit complete data at this time.

Facility 200078 Mercy Physicians only submitted data for Q3 and Q4 of 2013.

Facility 200084 Maine Health Center - Bath informed MHDO that Bath Physician Offices has been combined with MMC OP (200009) during a system conversion in December 2012.

## Eastern Maine Health

In August 2015, EMH brought to the attention of the MHDO that due to a system issue, services reported on a 1500 with no associated UB had not been reported to the MHDO for their **provider-based clinics only** for data submitted to the MHDO for the time period 2009-2015. This issue does impact this release. Note: The issue has been corrected and will be reflected in the 2014 hospital data.

# Assignment of Geocodes

In the restricted data releases the MHDO has historically assigned a geocode which has been populated in the geocode field. The MHDO has decided to modify the algorithm used to determine this geocode. The MHDO will now assign a geocode when the city, state, and ZIP match the entries that appear on the canonical list of geocode values. The MHDO will no longer impute geocodes based on incomplete or conflicting city, state, or zip information. In order to improve our ability to assign geocodes in the future we will work with those facilities that have not been able to provide consistent city, state, and zip information.

We have included a data table of Maine geocodes provided by the Maine Office of GIS (MEGIS); this is the canonical list used for the geocode assignment.

In this and future releases of our restricted data the MHDO will provide the data elements of county, city, state and zip code, along with the geocode only when they are specifically requested. By default, data releases will only include county to identify a patient’s home address.

# Issues with “Covers Period From Date (DOS1)”

It has come to the MHDO’s attention that the “Covers Period From Date (DOS1)” was not able to be populated by certain data submitters in all cases. Thus, when counting number of records by hospital we would recommend that you use the Statement Covers Period Thru Date (DOS2) as this lines up with the record counts reported by the hospitals.

# Issues with MHDO-Assigned Medical Record Numbers (MRN) across Time

The MHDO has been made aware of some issues in how the MHDO-Assigned Medical Record Number (Scram\_MRN) has been created in the past that create the potential for clashes to occur (that is, two different MRNs yielding the same MHDO-Assigned Medical Record Number). These issues have been resolved in the current dataset. However, there is the potential that MRNs may differ from those distributed in previous versions of the data.

Data users are reminded that the MHDO-Assigned Medical Record Number generally cannot be used to track individuals between facilities; the same MRN may be used at different facilities to represent different individuals. Also, even within the same facility, an individual may not retain the same MRN across time; when hospitals merger or when they transition to new data systems, new MRNs may be assigned. The MHDO has no control over the MRN assignment policies within facilities.

The MHDO is developing data elements that will allow an individual to be more reliably tracked both across time within a given facility and between facilities.