

MaineHealth

November 14, 2018

Karynlee Harrington
Executive Director
Maine Health Data Organization
151 Capitol Street
102 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0102

RE: Response to UnitedHealthcare's Comments on MaineHealth's ME Data Request
Number 2018062601

Dear Ms. Harrington,

MaineHealth appreciates the opportunity to respond to the comments made by UnitedHealthcare on MaineHealth's ME Data Request Number 2018062601 and will address UnitedHealthcare's top concerns - namely by providing use cases specific to the APCD database. We trust this letter will result in the clarity needed in order to approve MaineHealth's Data Request.

For a number of years, MaineHealth's vision has been to work together so our communities are the healthiest in America. MaineHealth considers the Maine Health Data Organization as one of those organizations we work together with to improve the health of our communities through the data offerings available through your organization. For many years, MaineHealth has applied for, received, and utilized this data to assist in improving the health of our communities. It has never been, nor will it ever be MaineHealth's intent to cause harm, adverse effects, or anti-competitiveness as UnitedHealthcare suggests may occur in its comment letter to you. Furthermore, the MHDO data can be requested, purchased, and used by most industry stakeholders, therefore, MaineHealth is not in any special position by requesting, purchasing, and using this data.

It is MaineHealth's belief that we have sufficiently described our intended use of the data in our application. The wording used in our application is the same wording MaineHealth has used for years and has always received the requested data. Over the years that MaineHealth has been requesting this data, it has never come to our attention that our use of MHDO data has caused any harm, adverse effects, or anti-competitiveness. Therefore, it is MaineHealth's continued position that the data be released as requested.

Given the aforementioned, MaineHealth is happy to provide additional information on how the data will be used. The following specific uses are intended:


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- Develop a state-wide assessment of aggregated service utilization and cost variation by hospital service area to enable MaineHealth to prudently monitor and assess its effectiveness at managing care delivery and reducing the cost of healthcare to residents of Maine. The data is instrumental in enabling MaineHealth to continuously measure its effectiveness at delivering high value health care across the entire community it serves. This analysis requires patient zip code so that patients may be assigned to hospital service areas.
- Gain better understanding of service utilization patterns throughout MaineHealth service areas so that the system can continuously improve its ability to deliver quality healthcare and better manage population health. These analyses include examining the distance that patients travel to receive various types of care which requires provider identifiable data.
- Assist the MaineHealth Accountable Care Organization with understanding broader utilization and cost variation patterns beyond its own attributed population for the purpose of performance assessment and improvement. This broader analysis will be augmented by the detailed claims data currently provided by our payer partners specific to our attributed patient populations.
- Segment data by Medicare, MaineCare, and Commercial enrollees to understand and address differences in patient populations.
- Partner with Vermont APCD data users to perform grant funded research examining the impact of legislation on opioid prescribing behaviors. Vermont and Maine APCD analyses are done in parallel and no data is shared.
- Study the intensity of healthcare delivery and hospice utilization for Maine patient's at the end of life.
- Monitor the adoption of low dose CT scans for lung cancer screening across the state.
- Study the relationship between small area economic indicators and health outcomes.
- Continue studying the relationship between health behaviors, healthcare utilization, and outcomes. (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29338952>).


As these examples bear witness, MaineHealth seeks this data to improve the health and health care of the patients and populations we are privileged to serve.

We respectfully request the expedient release of the data as reflected in our application – ME Data Request Number 2018062601.

Thank you.



Ed Farrell, MHA
VP, Strategy & Business Development
MaineHealth



Lori Travis, MS
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MaineHealth