

MHDO Hospital Data FAQs

Below are some of the most commonly asked questions to date regarding the MHDO hospital data. Our goal is to continue to build on this resource to include information and insight that will help others as they work with the MHDO hospital data. For our complete FAQ please click here: <https://mhdo.maine.gov/faqs_data.html>

# MHDO Hospital Encounter Data Questions

Q. Do you have data dictionaries for the hospital encounter outpatient and inpatient data sets?

A. Not as this time, however data dictionaries for our hospital encounter data will be available in late 2017. In the interim, the following resource is available to assist users: <https://mhdo.maine.gov/_dataRqstDocs/HospitalEncounterReleaseElements_161013.xlsx>.

Q. In the MHDO Hospital data, does Emergency Department data include both Inpatient and Outpatient data sets?

A. Yes, Emergency Department (ED) data is a subset of the Hospital for both the Inpatient and Outpatient data sets. The ED data follows the same format as the Outpatient Hospital data. It is processed with the Inpatient and Outpatient data and is available for the same time periods as these datasets.

Effective with the 2015 hospital data there is an ED Flag in both the Inpatient and Outpatient data. This flag is set based on the presence of ED-related revenue codes present for each encounter in the Inpatient data and either ED-related revenue codes or ED-related CPT codes in the Outpatient data.

Please refer to the 2015 Inpatient Release Notes for important details about the MaineGeneral Medical Center's ED-related revenue codes from July 2013-September 2015 that prevent the ED Flag from being set properly.

Q. Where can I go to see what data elements are included on the Hospital data sets?

A. You can find the list of data elements included in MHDO’s Hospital data here by going to our Hospital Data page: <https://mhdo.maine.gov/_dataRqstDocs/HospitalEncounterReleaseElements_161013.xlsx>

Q. What is the MHDO-assigned Medical Record Number (MRN)?

A: The MHDO-assigned Medical Record Number (MRN) is an obfuscated and transformed version of the MRN that is submitted by facilities to uniquely identify patients. 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 merge 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. MHDO plans consider a Rule Change to add patient SSN, patient name and patient street address to Chapter 241 Uniform Reporting System for Hospital Inpatient Data Sets and Hospital Outpatient Data Sets in 2017-2018 with an effective date of 2019.

Q. What Diagnosis Related Group (DRG) information is available in the Inpatient data.

A. MHDO assigns DRGs using the 3M Grouper software. Currently, two different sets of DRG codes and Major Diagnostic Categories (MDC) codes are created: one based on the All Patients Refined Diagnosis Related Groups (APR-DRG) and the other on the Medicare Severity-Diagnosis Related Groups (MS-DRG). The MDHO had previously also distributed two older versions of DRGs (AP-DRGS and CMS-DRGs) which have since been depreciated by their maintainers.

Both the APR-DRG and the MS-DRG are revised annually. The version of the DRGs used for records with discharge dates before 10/1/2015 was 32.0; the version used for records on or after this date was 33.0.

Q. What diagnosis fields are available for release in the current Rule Chapter 241 layout for the Hospital data?

A. In the current version of Rule Chapter 241, amended on November 22, 2015 the diagnosis fields that are available are Version 040 which has one principal diagnosis, one admitting diagnosis code, two external injury codes, and eight other diagnosis codes (ICD-9); the versions 050 and 060 layout has one principal diagnosis code, one admitting diagnosis code, two external injury codes, and eight other diagnosis codes (ICD-10). Note: ICD-9 and ICD-10 data elements are stored in different fields. For instance, the ICD-9 principal diagnosis is stored in the field IP7004\_PrincipalDiagnosisCode while the ICD-10 version is stored in IP7104\_PrincipalDiagnosis. Whenever possible, data elements are prefixed with the data element name from the input layout specified in Rule Chapter 241, Uniform Reporting System for Hospital Inpatient Data Sets and Hospital Outpatient Data Sets, which provides additional details on the derivation of each element in Appendix B-2 (<https://mhdo.maine.gov/_finalStatutesRules/Chapter%20241_151122.doc>).

Q. Does the Hospital data include uninsured patients’ diagnoses? In other words, would the uninsured patients’ data be the same as all other patients’ data except that there would be no payment information?

A. Yes, services rendered to the uninsured are reported in the Hospital Inpatient and Outpatient data. Patients with no insurance appear with “self-pay” indicated as the primary “payer.” Note: The hospital encounter data releases exclude all financial data.

Q. Should I see a procedure code on all Inpatient admissions?

A. No, the service lines where procedures codes are missing are what we would expect to see – for example medical sub-service lines (medical cardiology, medical orthopedics and spine, etc.).

Q. Why do some hospitals have high rates of self-pay for pay2 and pay3 fields?

A. There are two hospitals that have confirmed that their system defaults to self-pay in the payer fields after all validated insurance carriers are included.

# General MHDO Data Questions

Q. What format are the data sets released in?

A. MHDO Data sets are released in fixed-width text (.txt) files. These can be imported on a variety of platforms and are widely recognized by data management and statistical analysis tools. Data users typically use a database like SQL server or a statistical analysis package like SAS.

Q. Is there a way to link the APCD and Hospital encounter data sets together?

A. No, not at this time as there are no direct data elements released in the data that would allow the linkage between the All Payer Claims Database (APCD) and the Hospital encounter data. The MHDO has discussed the feasibility and utility of linking these data sets internally and making available as a combined data set. At this time there is limited utility in developing one patient index across the different data streams (claims and hospital data). Instead MHDO is focusing our resources on making sure that we have the data elements needed to identify unique individuals in the data streams so that we can accurately link records internally and release de-identified records.

Q. Once I’ve been approved to receive MHDO data, how will the data be sent?

A. When the data are ready to be released, you’ll receive an e-mail from MHDO's data vendor, NORC with the links to the data release files to be downloaded. We use the file sharing platform Accellion to ensure a secure file transfer. If you do not have an Accellion account, you’ll need to register for one.

The following instructions will be included in the e-mail:

*To begin downloading the files you’ll need to click on one of the links. Because this is a secure download you will be asked to enter the address that received the e-mail. If you do not already have a download account, you will receive a second verification e-mail. Click on the link in that e-mail, choose a password, and you will then be able to authenticate and download the files.*

Q. I received an email to download MHDO data but I need one of my colleagues to download the data. Can I forward them the email?

A. No, the data transmittal email cannot be forwarded to others. Only original recipients are authorized to download the files. Please contact MHDO to modify the Data Custodian of your request if needed.

Q. How long will I have to download the data?

A. You have 90 days after receipt of the e-mail with the instructions to download the data. If you need to access the data after this time you will need to e-mail the MHDO at Webcontact.MHDO@maine.gov. Include in the subject line your Data Request Number. The e-mail should explain why you need extended access to download the data files.

Q. What do I do if I have questions regarding the data?

A. Send your questions in an e-mail to MHDO at Webcontact.MHDO@maine.gov. In the subject line of the message please include your Data Request Number.