



Maine Health Data Processing Center

Annual Report 2003

Beginning in 2004, the public is expected to have access—for the first time ever—to a rich new source of information about how Maine people use health care services across the state.

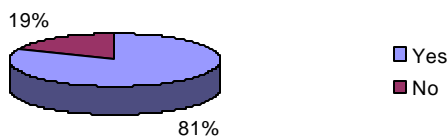
In 2003, following an intensive two-year development period, the **Maine Health Care Claims Data Bank** began to be populated with a wide range of health care utilization and cost data that has never before been collected and made available to the public. By the time this data is available for public release later in 2004, it is expected to contain information from nearly 55 million insurance claims.

2003 Accomplishments

Over the past 12 months, more than 100 private insurance companies and health plan administrators located throughout the nation have submitted claims data on the Maine residents that they insure. Important steps have also taken place over the past year toward incorporating MaineCare (Medicaid) and Medicare claims data into the new Data Bank in 2004.

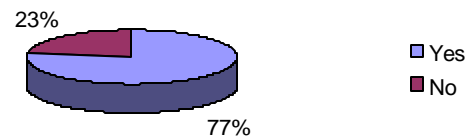
The primary focus in 2003 has been the processing of data from health insurers and third party administrators. Data files are submitted regularly by all commercial carriers and third party administrators covering Maine residents. Payers with more than 1,000 covered lives submit data on a monthly basis. Over 98 percent of the payers required to file attempted to submit data. As shown below, 81 percent of the required submissions were received.

Percentage of Required 2003 Files That Were Submitted



Each file is passed through a rigorous set of edits and validation checks. Those files with data problems that exceed the percent of errors allowed for one or more data elements are rejected for correction and resubmission. The pie chart below shows that 77 percent of the records expected for 2003 have been received and passed all edits.

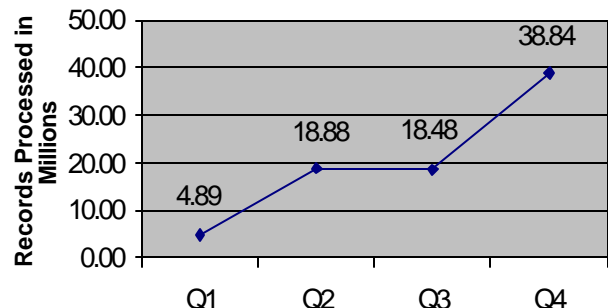
Percentage of Required 2003 Records That Were Accepted



In 2003, the Maine Health Data Processing Center (Center) processed 529 test files and 3,644 production files from 109 payers and third party administrators. Since this was the first complete year of operation, there was a significant amount of testing and resubmitting of live files, with some payers resubmitting a single file as many as 19 times. In total, the Center processed 6.3 million test records and over 70 million live records.

Below is a graph displaying the volume of records processed in each quarter.

2003



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The Center also enhanced the processing system in 2003. The enhancements focused on increasing system efficiency and improving communications with payers through system generated emails detailing problems. By the fall of 2003, data processing for payers with fewer than 100,000 lives was completed within 2 hours of submission and manual error review and notification was completed within 5 working days. Work also began on the development of the extract application for passing the data to the Maine Health Data Organization (MHDO).

Although there was a tremendous effort made by the payers to submit quality data in 2003, the first half of 2004 will include processing and re-processing as much as 25% of the 2003 submissions.

2004 Goals

During the first quarter of 2004 approximately 50 payers who submit data on an annual basis will be testing with the Center. Data from the annual submitters is due in April 2004.

In 2004 the Center will begin to transfer the first copies of claims and eligibility data to the Maine Health Data Organization. In addition to handling a huge volume of records, the transfer is a complex process with many distinct steps for each type of data. The transfer will include summary reports which will attest to the basic quality and completeness of the data. Ultimately, this transfer will lead to the first public release of the data.

The Center has agreed to develop and maintain a Data Dictionary for MHDO distribution with the release of the data. The Data Dictionary will document the data elements collected and the valid codes. It will also include information from the payer notes that are used in the editing process.

In 2004 the Center will begin work on a provider reference table to assign a single MHDO identifier for each unique provider. The work will be done in phases with Maine hospitals being identified initially. The second phase will be to assign each provider a standard specialty code. Both of these phases must be completed before the public release of data by MHDO. The remainder of the year will

be devoted to phase III—assigning a unique provider number to the non-Maine hospital providers. This will be an ongoing activity.

A New Resource For Understanding Health Access & Cost Issues

The Data Bank is based on the fundamental belief that more data is needed in order to better understand and address the factors driving up the use and cost of health care services in Maine. Health insurance claims appear to be the best available source for this information at this time. Claims data is also considered to be a useful resource for organizations working to improve the health status of Maine people and to ensure that high quality care is provided in hospitals, doctors' offices and other locations throughout the state.

Maine's Health Care Claims Data Bank contains detailed information about how Maine people use every element of the health care system, from primary care to outpatient services; from hospital care and prescription drug purchases to mental health services and alternative care. If health insurance is used to pay for the service or product, that information will be collected and integrated into the Data Bank by the Maine Health Data Processing Center. The Data Bank does not include information about Maine's uninsured population because no claims are involved in the payment for their care.

The information contained in the Data Bank can be analyzed in many ways to help us better understand a wide variety of issues and make more informed decisions about how we can improve the health status of Maine people, moderate the growth of costs, extend insurance coverage, and improve quality.

There are rigorous safeguards built into the system to protect individual patient privacy at every step of the process. All information that could be used, for example, to identify an individual is encrypted by insurers before it is submitted to the Maine Health Data Processing Center. As a further safeguard, all encrypted patient identifiers are encrypted a second time before the data is deposited into the Data Bank.

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What Information Is Included In The Claims Data Bank?

The Data Bank includes medical, pharmacy and dental payments made by insurers as well as estimated payments made by the individuals who are insured, such as co-pays, deductibles and co-insurance. Clinical data including ICD-9 diagnosis codes, CPT procedure codes, drug codes and dental procedure codes will indicate the types of conditions being treated and the types of services rendered.

The Data Bank tracks dates of service, quantities of service, and the setting in which the service was provided. On the patient side, the Data Bank captures the type of contract (single, 2 person, etc.), type of insurance coverage (HMO, POS, indemnity, etc.), date of birth, zip code of residence, gender, and relationship to subscriber.

Background

The Maine Health Data Processing Center was incorporated shortly after the Maine Legislature and Governor Angus King approved its creation in 2001 to build what is believed to be the nation's first comprehensive statewide health care claims database. In 2001 the Center focused on establishing the Board, developing bylaws, and performing other administrative tasks associated with the organization.

The first half of 2002 was spent in defining the data that was to be captured and providing technical assistance to MHDO during the rule making process. The data rules were finalized in July 2002. The remainder of 2002 was spent building state-of-the-art automated computer software that could efficiently receive, process, track and edit tens of millions of records. In 2002 the Center also worked with MHDO to identify and register the insurers and plan administrators located in Maine and throughout the United States who were required to submit data. The first test data from payers was processed in October of 2002.

Maine Health Data Processing Center

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