



Mariannette Miller-Meeks, B.S.N., M.Ed., M.D.
Director

Terry E. Branstad
Governor

Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor

PUBLIC HEALTH MEANINGFUL USE MEASURES
UPDATE TO LETTER ORIGINALLY ISSUED FEBRUARY 21, 2011

July 6, 2011

Iowa Providers:

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) is committed to helping Iowa providers achieve meaningful use of health information technology. This includes the ability to exchange immunization, reportable disease, and syndromic surveillance data electronically from providers through their certified electronic health records. At this time, eligible professionals and hospitals in Iowa will not be able to perform the tests prescribed for the public health measures of stage 1 meaningful use.

Current status:

- Iowa's Immunization Registry Information System (IRIS) does not have the capacity to receive immunization data electronically from electronic health records. The IDPH is in the process of transitioning to a new software application that will allow immunization data to be submitted electronically through the statewide health information network (HIN). As soon as IDPH has details available regarding file specifications for data exchange and test messages, information will be posted on the IRIS website at www.idph.state.ia.us/ImmTB/Immunization.aspx
- Iowa's Disease Surveillance System (IDSS) does not have the capacity to receive reportable lab results electronically from electronic health records. The IDPH is working with the HIN vendor to implement electronic reporting capabilities through the HIN.
- IDPH does not maintain a syndromic surveillance data registry and therefore cannot accept syndromic data electronically from electronic health records. The IDPH is conducting an assessment to determine if syndromic data will be electronically collected in the future; however there has not been any decision made at this time.

As the IDPH works to upgrade its technology and standards to enable the receipt of electronic information from electronic health records, eligible professionals and hospitals should claim an exclusion in calendar year 2011 from the public health meaningful use measures. Please see the enclosed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document with additional information.

Sincerely,

Mariannette Miller-Meeks, B.S.N., M.Ed., M.D.
Director, Iowa Department of Public Health

Enclosure: FAQ for Meaningful Use and Public Health

THIS LETTER IS FOR PROVIDERS THAT DESIRE DOCUMENTATION FROM IDPH ABOUT THE ABILITY OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ELECTRONICALLY. IT DOES NOT NEED TO BE SENT TO CMS OR IOWA MEDICAID ENTERPRISE.

FAQ for Meaningful Use and Public Health

June 2011

Q: The final meaningful use rule requires Eligible Providers “EPs” and Eligible Hospitals “EHs” to report on a total of five meaningful use objectives from the menu set. When selecting five objectives from the menu set, EPs and EHs must choose one option from the public health menu set (two available for EPs, three for EHs). The Iowa Department of Public Health “IDPH” is not currently able to accept data from any of the public health menu set objectives. How should providers handle this?

A: For meaningful use reporting, the provider should select *only* one of the public health measures. The provider then claims an exclusion from the selected measure. For more detailed information please go to http://questions.cms.hhs.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/10162/kw/public%20health

Q: In other words, can a provider or hospital achieve Stage 1 Meaningful Use even if their state is not set up to electronically accept the meaningful use public health objectives?

A: Yes, by following the instructions above.

Q: Does the IDPH have the capacity to accept Immunization records electronically from an EHR?

A: Not at this time. The department is in the process of transitioning to a new software application that will allow for this to be done. The exchange of immunization records will occur through the statewide Health Information Network “HIN”. The long-term goal is to seamlessly submit information from EHRs to IRIS through a direct connection with the HIN. Until this capacity is fully tested and implemented, providers will be able to access the HIN web portal to upload and send a batch test file through the secure messaging service (built on NHIN Direct specifications). The HIN web portal and secure messaging service should be available by Fall 2011. A message mapping guide for test messages should be published by the end of 2011.

Q: When will the IDPH be ready to accept Immunization records electronically from an EHR (EP/EH menu option)?

A: The IDPH is working to implement electronic reporting capabilities. We anticipate this functionality will be available in 2012.

Q: Does the IDPH have the capacity to accept reportable lab results electronically from an EHR?

A: Not at this time. The IDPH is working with its HIN vendor to implement electronic reporting capabilities through the HIN.

Q: When will the IDPH be ready to accept reportable lab results electronically from an EHR (EH menu option)?

A: The IDPH is working with its Health Information Network "HIN" vendor to implement electronic reporting capabilities. A timeline for implementation has not been solidified although we anticipate accepting test messages in 2012.

Q: Does the IDPH have the capacity to accept Syndromic Surveillance data electronically from an EHR (EP/EH menu option)?

A: IDPH does not have a syndromic surveillance data registry and therefore cannot accept syndromic data electronically from EHRs. The IDPH is conducting an assessment to determine if this will be available in the future however there has not been any decision made at this time.

Q. Will the IDPH be able to accept electronic information in 2012? Will we be able to claim an exclusion from public health meaningful use measures next year as well?

A. Iowa providers should only plan to claim an exclusion in calendar year 2011. IDPH is actively working to upgrade its technology and standards to enable the receipt of electronic information from electronic health records. As additional information is available, it will be accessible to providers at <http://idph.state.ia.us> and <http://IowaeHealth.org>. To be added to a distribution list to be notified of changes in capacity to receive electronic health information, please contact tracy.donner@idph.iowa.gov.