Wisconsin Health Information Organization FAQs Regarding Public Reporting

Q: What is the Wisconsin Health Information Organization?
A: The Wisconsin Health Information Organization (WHIO) was formed in 2005 by leaders from health care organizations, major employers, insurers and public agencies, who share a commitment to the future of health care. WHIO’s mission is to widely distribute data and information for the purpose of improving the safety, quality, efficiency and affordability of health care in Wisconsin.

Q: Why is WHIO undertaking this public reporting initiative?
A: WHIO and its founders and members, which include the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality (WCHQ), the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) and the Wisconsin Medical Society (Society), support the value of transparency of information to help accomplish this mission. Further, the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services has entered into a contract with WHIO to meet the requirements placed on the Department under Act 153, subsequent to the Physician Outpatient Visit Data (POVD) legislation, to publicly report provider performance in a language understandable by the layperson.

Q: Where does WHIO get the information used to generate the ratings?
A: Through the support and technical contributions of its founding members, WHIO has created one of the most comprehensive sources of health claims information available in the United States. This Datamart has an unprecedented volume of data, covering more than 300 million claims for care provided to 4 million Wisconsin residents. It holds a rolling 27 months of claims data, and a total of 23.7 million episodes of care are now found in the database.

Q: What defines an “episode of care?”
A: An episode of care is defined as the series of treatments and follow-up related to a single medical event, such as a broken leg or heart surgery or the year-long treatment of a diabetic patient. WHIO uses the Symmetry Episode Grouper developed by Johns Hopkins University.

Q: What reporting period is being used for the ratings?
A: WHIO is using a 12-month reporting period for initial ratings—April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014—and intends to refresh the public website data every 12 months.

Q: How is this initiative different than the other consumer health care websites?
A: The volume of claims data contained in WHIO’s system is greater than the other consumer initiatives by entrepreneurs or others with subsets of data.
Q: How do I view my individual ratings?
A: Click on the “Register/Login” link in the upper right corner of the public reporting website: www.MyHealthWI.org. Once you are logged in, you are able to obtain specific reports for any of the clinics listed; if you are a physician, you can download your individual “Buck E Badger” report. If you are unable to register or experience other difficulties, please contact Dusan “Duke” Mihajlovic at dusan.mihajlovic@wisconsinhealthinfo.org. For assistance accessing your report you may contact Cindy Helstad (cindy.helstad@wismed.org), the Wisconsin Medical Society's senior director of research and analytics.

Q: My group practice is not listed because I do not meet the requirements of three or more physicians, and 150 episodes of care. Can I volunteer to have my group practice ratings included on the website?
A: Yes, any group practice that does not meet the minimum requirements of three or more physicians and 150 episodes of care can voluntarily request that their ratings be included on the website. Please contact WHIO CEO Jo Musser at jo.musser@wisconsinhealthinfo.org to do so. Once a group practice requests inclusion, it will not be allowed to opt out of future ratings when the data are refreshed.

Q: How can my group practice increase our rating?
A: If your organization has a subscription or membership with WHIO, you are able to drill down into the data to find opportunities for improvement. If your organization currently does not have access to the data, you may contact Glenda Hodge at glenda.hodge@wisconsinhealthinfo.org for more information. WHIO can provide your organization with access, or you can obtain a custom report with more detailed data from WHIO or the Wisconsin Medical Society.

Q: How often are the data refreshed or updated?
A: The data are updated every 6 months or twice a year. WHIO is currently working to obtain Medicare fee-for-service claims data in 2015, which will make its Datamart the most complete and largest claims database in the country.

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