



Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council

To: Chief Executive Officers
PA Hospitals and Health Systems

From: Joseph Martin, Executive Director 
PA Health Care Cost Containment Council

Cc: PHC4 Data Contacts

Date: December 3, 2010

Subject: IMPORTANT - PHC4 Update on Laboratory Data Collection Process

The PA Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4) appreciates your cooperation during these past months while we've been taking the necessary steps to transition to a new process for laboratory data collection. As you know, PHC4's reauthorizing legislation (Act 3 of 2009), states that "The Council shall not require any data sources to contract with any specific vendor for submission of any specific data elements to the Council", and that "The Council shall maintain a list of at least two vendors that may be chosen by any data source for submission of any specific data elements."

On September 1, 2010, PHC4 released the Laboratory Data Reporting Manual (available on the PHC4 website at www.phc4.org), which describes the standardized data and file specifications required for laboratory data submissions by hospitals and vendors. The Council also released a Request for Information (RFI) with the intent of identifying vendors that meet our specifications and which hospitals may choose for the submission of laboratory data to PHC4. I emphasize the word "may" since hospitals are not required to choose a vendor from this list; there may be qualified vendors that did not respond to PHC4's RFI.

At this time, we can share the following information with you about the process for submitting laboratory data:

- 1) According to the RFI process, there are currently two vendors that have met the published data specifications and will appear on the list PHC4 is required to maintain under statute. This list is not closed and will be an ongoing process: These vendors are:
 - a. Quantros, Inc. – Contact Person: Tom Leahy, Executive VP, Sales & Marketing, (p) 408-514-4845, (e) [tleahy@quantros.com](mailto:t Leahy@quantros.com)

- b. Sunquest Information Systems, Inc. – Contact Person: Tim Pomeroy
Sales Account Manager, Pennsylvania, (p) 520-570-2827, (e)tim.pomeroy@sunquestinfo.com

- 2) Hospitals are not required to contract with any of the vendors on the list above; hospitals are free to contract with vendors not on the list, as long as the specifications for submission are followed;

- 3) Hospitals can develop their own system for submission, as long as the data specifications are met;

- 4) In addition, there will be two options for hospitals that intend or desire to manually report laboratory test results:
 - a. Hospitals can use Microsoft Access to manually input laboratory data and export the fixed-width delimited flat text file for submission to PHC4. Instructions to do this are located at <https://www.phc4submit.org/LabDataReporting.aspx>.

 - b. A second option for manual data entry will be available as part of PHC4's upcoming laboratory data collection system. The laboratory data collection system will include a Web-based tool providing functionality for data correction, including adding, changing and deleting laboratory records. This tool is scheduled to be available starting April 1, 2011.

As a reminder, PHC4 intends to restart the collection of the required laboratory data directly from hospitals starting with the Quarter 1, 2011 collection period, which includes discharge data from January 1, 2011 through March 31, 2011.

While PHC4 will begin accepting this data starting on April 1, 2011, I want to emphasize that, under law, it is not due to PHC4 until June 30, 2011.

Again, we thank you for your continued cooperation during this important transition. If you have any questions, please contact Reneé Greenawalt at rgreenawalt@phc4.org.