

The Affordable Care Act is Working

The Affordable Care Act is working. In just one year under the Affordable Care Act, 10.3 million uninsured Americans have gained access to quality, affordable health care. And roughly 85 percent of those who signed up last year, using the Health Insurance Marketplace, received financial assistance. This year's open enrollment period is November 15, 2014 - February 15, 2015; but the deadline is December 15 for coverage that starts on January 1, 2015. For more information, please visit HealthCare.gov or CuidadoDeSalud.gov. Consumers can find local, in-person help at Localhelp.healthcare.gov or call toll free 1-800-318-2596 for assistance in 150 languages.

Florida Department of Health Adopts Continuous Query for All Data Bank Queries

The Florida Department of Health (DOH) is the first government agency in the United States to implement widespread adoption of [Continuous Query](#) for all health care professions regulated in their state. Continuous Query is a way for health care entities – including licensing boards – to register health care practitioners with the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and receive continuous monitoring of any reports filed with the Data Bank on the registered practitioners. Health care entities also can use [One-Time Query](#) to receive a single set of copies of reports filed on a practitioner at the time the One-Time Query is submitted.



Data Bank News interviewed a representative of the Florida DOH to find out how Continuous Query was approved by its leadership and how it is benefitting their organization.

What benefits have you seen since enrolling practitioners in Continuous Query?

We have seen multiple benefits from using Continuous Query. One, our staff is better able to manage the workload because we receive the queries daily; therefore, staff members can more easily work with practitioners on a one-to-one basis. (Before we used Continuous Query, we received a large amount of licensee data once or twice a year, with hundreds of records to be analyzed at a time.) Two, because of the real-time updates that we are receiving, we are able to reach out to the practitioner and provide awareness of their statutory obligation to report these actions to their respective state licensing board within the statutory timeframe. And finally, because of receiving the most up-to-date reports from around the nation, we are

better able to ensure the safety of the citizens of Florida. This fulfills our agency's focus to be the nation's leader in quality health care regulation.

How have the real-time responses been a benefit?

The credentialing process is more efficient. In addition, Continuous Query assists the practitioner in staying compliant with the Florida profiling statute, by reminding them to report any action taken within the 15-day statutory timeframe. Using this real-time notification service allows Florida to effectively collaborate in practitioner licensing, on not only Florida's actions, but actions that come in from across the nation.

Do you have any instances in which a response has changed an outcome for a practitioner?

Often, the practitioner is not aware of reports being filed with the NPDB. Therefore, an opportunity is available for the practitioner to address any issues, and by doing so, reports have been updated or corrected. In some cases, it has made a more positive result for the practitioner. Because of Continuous Query, there is an additional regulation safety net available in Florida. This enables DOH to protect, promote and improve the health care for all people in our state.

Can you tell us how the use of Continuous Query was proposed and how it is different from your former process?

While working with the Data Bank, the Program Administrator proposed that the Florida DOH could deliver great cost savings to the citizens of Florida while receiving data from NPDB in a much faster, timelier way. Our previous method of submitting large batches of queries annually using One-Time Query resulted in the staff review of large amounts of outdated information in a smaller timeframe. Due to our old querying cycle, data previously received from the NPDB could be potentially up to two years old. Now, we are guaranteed to always have the most current information on all Florida practitioners.

Who in your organization began advocating for the adoption of Continuous Query for all available practitioners? How did they convince others?

It only took one person to start the conversation. Once others came on board, we presented the information to the unit manager and bureau chief. The cost and time savings were seen as a benefit to the Florida DOH and the State of Florida, and the widespread use of Continuous Query was approved and adopted within days.

What would you tell an organization that would rather perform One-Time Queries on each practitioner?

I would tell them that not only have we increased our efficiency and experienced a cost savings, the switch gives us the most up-to-date information, in real time. It also has put

Florida in a better position to help advocate for a stronger and safer national public health care system, and that is a benefit for everyone.

If you would like to bring the benefits of Continuous Query to your organization, visit the [Continuous Query](#) page to start enrolling practitioners.

DPDB Offers Customer Support Resource Series



The Division of Practitioner Data Bank (DPDB) released the first in a series of technical assistance videos created to help both new and veteran Data Bank users.

The first video in the newly minted Customer Support Resource Series explains to users how to access NPDB statistical pages and the NPDB Data Analysis Tool. The statistical data consists of more than 6,000 pages of ready-to-use, downloadable tables and graphs. Information on these pages comes from a number of sources, including Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. Census, and national health care-related organizations.

The video takes the viewer step by step through features of the research tools, and helps the viewer develop skills needed to obtain valuable information. Want to know how many physician assistants are in your state? Interested in knowing how many social workers in Georgia had reports in the Data Bank over the past 10 years? This video will show you how to use the Data Analysis Tool to find out.

The Research Applications video is already available through the NPDB website's [Community and Education](#) page. Additional videos will be added to the series as they are produced. Each video will assist a different audience of reporters who submit clinical privilege actions, medical malpractice payments, and adverse licensure actions.

2015 Education Forum

DPDB is hosting its 2015 Education Forum, to be held in-person only, in spring of 2015 in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. This forum will provide information and technical assistance for Data Bank stakeholders on topics of interest and value to Data Bank users. Sessions will build on skills gained by users through the Customer Support Resource Series of videos, sharpening those skills. Through plenary presentations, small group break-outs, and access to one-on-one technical assistance, forum participants will be able to interact with the Data Bank more efficiently, effectively, and accurately. The Data Bank will provide more details in the coming months.



Data Bank
Fast Fact

Can the NPDB certify that an organization is eligible to report or query?

Answer: No. Each entity must determine its own eligibility to participate in the NPDB and must certify that eligibility to the Data Bank. Data Bank officials reserve the right to review and verify all elements of the documentation submitted with a registration, and also reserve the right to reject the registration if the entity is determined to be ineligible. Eligible entities are responsible for complying with all statutory and regulatory requirements that apply to them.