



NPDB-HIPDB DATA BANK NEWS



National Practitioner Data Bank—Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank

JANUARY 2011

Identity-Proofing: What to Expect

The October 2010 newsletter provided details about the new electronic authentication (e-authentication) security initiative coming to the Data Bank. E-authentication is a process of establishing confidence in user identities electronically presented to an information system. The new authentication measures are based on National Institute of Standards (NIST) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines, and are designed to enhance the overall security of the Data Bank by protecting the system from unauthorized use. Certifying Officials, Entity Data Bank Administrators, and users will be required to provide verification of identity (identity-proofing) and verification of organization affiliation in order to access the Data Bank. The new measures will be phased in over 2 years during the registration renewal process starting January 24, 2011. Health care organizations registering for the first time will begin using the identity-proofing procedures immediately, whereas renewing organizations will receive 60 days notice prior to their identity-proofing registration renewal date.

The new identity-proofing procedures will result in changes to the way organizations renew their registrations with the Data Bank. Entity Data Bank Administrators will fill an important role in verifying the identities of the users

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What Do You Think About Our New Look?

By now, we at the Data Bank hope you have had time to browse our newly redesigned Web site! Our Web site address, <http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov>, did not change, but we do have a crisp new look that we hope you like and find easier to navigate.

If you are a **Health Care Organization** or a **Practitioner** you can get to the information you need quickly and easily right from the home page. Prominent **News**, **Resources** and **Community and Education** links will let you know about the latest happenings, take you directly to the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) or Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) Guidebook and newsletters, and inform you about upcoming Data Bank outreach activities. Secondary pages feature a sidebar with submenus that include *About* and *How To* sections full of helpful information for Data Bank users.

Take some time to explore the site; you may be surprised and learn something new about the Data Bank. We would love to hear what you think about the new look at help@npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov. ❖



The redesigned Web site offers a new look and is easier to navigate.

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at their organizations and will also coordinate the verification process for their organizations. To prepare for these enhanced responsibilities, the Data Bank will provide Entity Data Bank Administrators with a short online training course that will qualify them to perform their duties as Local Registration Authorities (LRAs). The training, which will be available through the Data Bank Web site, will be required for organizations that are retaining user accounts, and will orient Entity Data Bank Administrators to the new procedures for creating user accounts and identity-proofing existing users.

While the Data Bank e-authentication effort is not complicated, it is a change from past processes. It will require Certifying Officials, Entity Data Bank Administrators, and users to become familiar with a new registration renewal process. Below are a few highlights of the changes they will notice.

Entity Data Bank Administrators and Certifying Officials–The Certifying Official (and Entity Data Bank Administrator, if a separate person) will need to print and complete a Registration document that must be notarized. In addition, they must include a copy of their work badge or a letter from their organization’s Human Resources Department to show proof of employment. These registration and identity-proofing documents must be mailed to the Data Bank at the address printed on the Registration document. Upon renewal, Entity Data Bank Administrators will select a new user ID and will have permission to perform non-administrative duties such as querying and reporting without a separate user account.

Data Bank Users–After the Entity Data Bank Administrator submits a user’s renewal or requests a new user account, each Data Bank user will receive an electronic notification to go into the system and print his or her Registration document. Users will sign the Registration document in front of their Entity Data Bank Administrator, or a Notary Public if they are not located with their Entity Administrator. The Entity Data Bank Administrator must mail the document to the Data Bank in order to complete the user’s registration. New users will also receive a notification after their Entity Data Bank Administrator has reviewed their documents and authorized them to use the system.

USER ACCOUNT INFORMATION
National Practitioner Data Bank
Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank

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graph LR
    A[Provide Entity Information] --> B[Establish Administrator Account]
    B --> C[Print Registration]
    C --> D[Final Steps]
            
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Next, create an administrator account for your organization. The administrator is the individual that manages your users' accounts, your organization's registration, your payment methods, and your agent relationships. If an entity has only one person who uses the IQRS, the entity may choose to use the administrator account as its regular user account.

After your registration has been approved, you may create additional accounts with administrator privileges if desired.

Is the administrator the same person as the certifying official? Yes No

Administrator Account Information

Choose a user ID and password for your account. User IDs must contain at least eight alphanumeric characters and are case sensitive. Passwords must contain at least eight alphanumeric characters including at least one number. Passwords are case sensitive.

User ID :

New Password : Password Rules

Confirm Password :

Entity Data Bank Administrators will indicate if they are also the Certifying Official, and they will self-select a User ID.

The Data Bank is dedicated to making the identity-proofing transition as smooth as possible for our users and is developing a variety of orientation materials to guide them through the new process. Notification will be provided when the materials become available on the Web site.❖

The above entity's next registration renewal date is: MAY 25, 2012

The above entity's current privileges are:

Query and Report to the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank, and
Query and Report to the National Practitioner Data Bank.

New Data Bank Correspondence

Date	Sender	Message
02/16/2011	NPDB-HIPDB	You have a user pending approval. After witnessing the user's signature you may approve the account .

A Data Bank Correspondence alerts Entity Data Bank Administrators that a user has completed online registration and is pending approval.

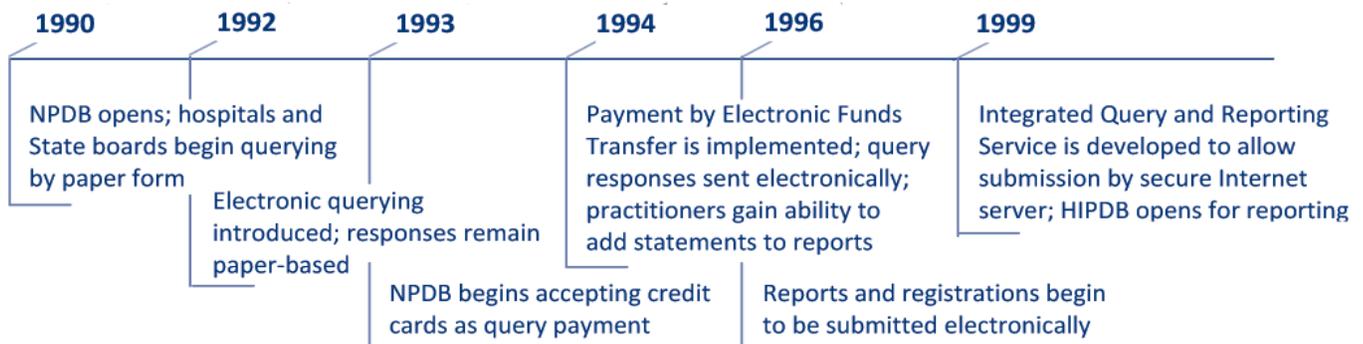
NPDB Observes 20 Years

On September 1, 2010 the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) celebrated 20 years of protecting public health and welfare by promoting effective peer review among medical practitioners. It was almost 25 years ago that President Ronald Reagan signed into law *Title IV of Public Law 99-660*, known as the *Health Care Quality Improvement Act of 1986*, which led to NPDB's establishment in 1990.

When the NPDB began processing queries and collecting its first practitioner reports in September 1990, all transactions were paper-based and the average query response time was 6 weeks. Today the NPDB provides query responses in minutes and handles over 100,000 queries per year. The NPDB has advanced significantly in terms of system changes, the volume of transactions it handles, and the diversity of technical capabilities it offers.

A pioneer among Federal information applications, the Data Bank captured attention early with its achievements:

- In 1993, the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) adopted an accreditation standard encouraging health maintenance organizations to query the NPDB. In the same year, HRSA's Bureau of Health Professions' (BHP) Division of Quality Assurance (now known as the Division of Practitioner Data Banks [DPDB], which manages the Data Bank) received a Federal Leadership award for NPDB's efforts to reduce paper processing through electronic data transmission.



Helping Organizations Understand

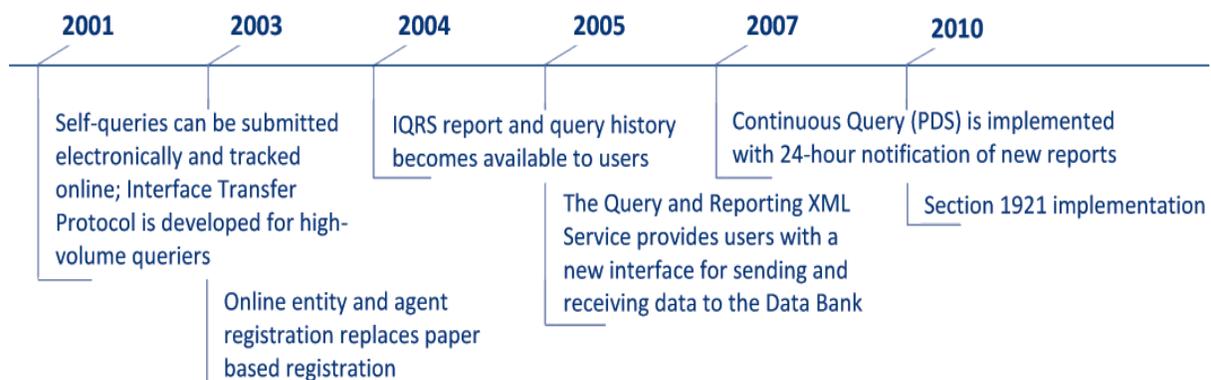
The Data Bank conducted a conference call on August 25, 2010 to help accreditation organizations understand the reporting requirements of Section 1921 of the *Social Security Act*. With the implementation of Section 1921, accreditation organizations are required to report to the Data Bank for the first time. Sixteen organizations participated in the call to discuss the requirements and why reporting is so important. Accreditation organizations must report final determinations of denial or termination of an accreditation status that indicate a risk to patient safety or quality of health care services. Understanding definitions in the law is critical to effectively exercising reporting responsibilities. Division of Practitioner Data Banks (DPDB) staff discussed the meanings of key statutory and regulatory definitions and provided examples of reportable and non-reportable events. A hospital would lose accreditation, for example, if it failed to have life-saving medicine available at all times because it would pose a risk to patient health and safety. Not every negative action is reportable. A negative action taken against a health care organization for reasons unrelated to patient safety or quality of health care services, such as a failure to pay survey fees, would be a non-reportable event.

DPDB staff discussed how to register as an accreditation organization and how to submit a report through the Data Bank Web site. To address attendees' specific issues, a question and answer session followed the presentation. The participants

of Service to Health Care

- In 1997, the NPDB's success spurred the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General to request that the BHP design, develop and operate the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) – a Data Bank established to help combat health care fraud and abuse. It was opened in 2000 and this past year also marked the tenth anniversary of the HIPDB.
- In 2002, DPDB received an Electronic Government Trailblazer Award for the NPDB-HIPDB. This award highlights federal, state, local, and international government programs that have successfully implemented the most innovative information systems in e-Government.
- In 2004 the NPDB-HIPDB program was honored as an "Excellence.gov Top Five Award" finalist. Excellence.gov recognizes best practices in Federal Electronic Government (e-Gov) applications. The award is given to Federal organizations for outstanding information technology achievements in the public service arena.

The timeline below provides an overview of the changes undertaken by the NPDB in its 20-year history, but the full magnitude of its achievements cannot be captured in a graphic. The Data Bank has evolved from a mainframe system that required weeks to process a query, to a Web-based application that responds to queries in minutes. Over the years, the Data Bank has remained responsive to a host of Federal statutes and changes in health care while at the same time it has fulfilled the needs of its increasing ranks of users by introducing ever faster, more efficient processes. This is truly an achievement to celebrate. ❖



New Section 1921 Reporting

agreed that the conference call format was helpful and informative. The reporting scenario examples, the Q&A session, and the guidance assisted accreditation organizations in understanding the reporting requirements. If you would like to learn more, or to view the online presentation for accreditation organizations, go to <http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/news/temp/AccreditationOrganizationReportingGuidance.pdf>.

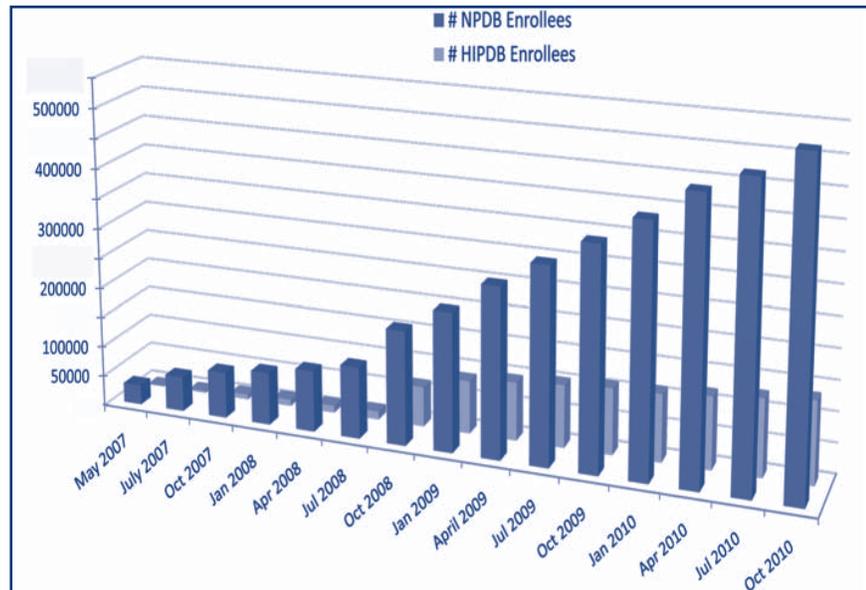
In other outreach efforts, Data Bank staff spoke to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) officials at the National Association of State Emergency Medical Officials (NASEMO) 2010 Annual Meeting. The Data Bank staff addressed EMS reporting requirements under Section 1921 and the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB). In addition, the Data Bank staff answered questions relating to emergency health professionals' reporting responsibilities and ability to query the Data Bank as part of licensure and certification decisions.

Can the Data Bank help you understand your reporting and querying requirements? To arrange a conference call or to have the Data Bank staff speak at your upcoming event, please complete the *Speaker Engagement Request* found at <http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/forms/SpeakerEngagementRequest.pdf>. ❖

Continuous Query (PDS) Use Is On the Rise

The first “pioneers” of Continuous Query (formerly known as Proactive Disclosure Service [PDS]) started using the Continuous Query feature in May 2007. During the initial prototype phase, 142 hospitals and their agents signed up to be among the first users of this new service. The service had more than 32,000 enrolled practitioners in its first month and came through its first 18 months of use with flying colors. In 2008, Continuous Query was made available to all users. Its use has increased steadily ever since, reaching more than 1,600 health care organizations as of October 2010, with a combined NPDB and HIPDB enrollment of more than 600,000 practitioners.

Entity Data Bank Administrators can activate Continuous Query for their organizations with just a few clicks from the *Administrator Options* screen. Why not start using Continuous Query now and find out how easy querying can be?❖



More than half a million practitioners are enrolled in Continuous Query (PDS).

HR Departments May Query NPDB

With the expansion of the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) last March to include information under Section 1921 of the *Social Security Act*, hospitals and other health care organizations are finding that the NPDB offers a new opportunity for their Human Resources (HR) departments. State licensure actions taken against all health care practitioners (not just physicians and dentists) are available in the NPDB, making it an excellent source for pre-employment checks on many types of health care staff. Your facility can query the NPDB to learn about adverse actions taken against nurses, therapists, technicians, social workers, and other types of allied health professionals. Let the NPDB improve your hiring process and enhance patient safety at the same time.

An HR department in a hospital or other health care organization has the option of registering in its own right and obtaining its own Data Bank Identification Number (DBID), even though the organization already has a DBID for its medical staff credentialing team. While it is possible to simply set up new user accounts for HR staff under the existing DBID, an HR Department can establish its own account with its own DBID, enabling it to keep the credentialing and HR functions separate. It should be kept in mind that HR departments have different functions and different reasons for querying than the credentialing staff. In cases where HR and credentialing teams share a Data Bank account, all eligible queriers at the organization will have access to all query results, which may not be desirable. In addition, if all of an organization's users are established under a single DBID, it will not be possible to differentiate between query charges for HR purposes and query charges related to credentialing. For these reasons, HR departments may prefer to set up their own Data Bank accounts to be used strictly for HR purposes.

If you have questions or need more information about how to proceed, please call the Data Bank Customer Service Center: 1-800-767-6732 (1-800-SOS-NPDB).❖

'Twas the (Conference) Season

Fall is one of the most popular times of year for conventions and other professional gatherings, and medical and health care conferences are no exception. For the National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB) the season included participating in 10 conferences between August and November. Among the events attended by NPDB-HIPDB were the Corporate Counsel Workshop of the Physicians Insurers Association of America (PIAA) and the National Association of Medical Staff Services (NAMSS) annual convention, as well as hosting 2 major events of its own – the Data Bank Education Forum and the annual NPDB Executive Committee Meeting.

Many of the events in which the Data Bank participates are those to which it is invited by organizations interested in increasing their understanding of the Data Bank. In turn, the Data Bank uses these opportunities to increase its understanding of how to optimize its response to stakeholders. The Data Bank is represented at these events by staff members who are experts in the policy and legislation that are its foundation. Often Data Bank staff are invited to speak on an appointed topic, but they also serve as exhibitors. Many conferences will find Data Bank staff managing a booth on the exhibit floor, as well as distributing educational materials and answering attendees' questions.

One of the best-attended Data Bank events, held at least once a year, is the Data Bank Education Forum. This forum actively engages users in discussion groups and feedback sessions. The Education Forum attracts individuals who use the system to query and report, and who interact regularly with the Data Bank. Typically, these forums are held in different geographic locations throughout the United States so that users from all across the country can attend in a location convenient for them. The forums target topics that are of interest to the users and serve as a learning experience for all participants. The attendees typically contribute many valuable ideas for improving the system. The 2010 Education Forum was held in Chicago in September with 60 people attending.

Altogether over the past year, Data Bank representatives spoke or exhibited at more than 30 different conferences or professional conventions in 21 States. "It's always exciting to hear the comments and ideas of the daily users of the Data Bank," commented Cynthia Grubbs, Director of the Division of Practitioner Data Banks. "We appreciate their collegial support and interest."

If you missed the Data Bank at last year's Education Forum, we hope you will plan to join us for one in 2011. You can find the current list of outreach activities on our schedule below, or on our Web site on the Data Bank Outreach page (http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/community_n_education/outreachEvents.jsp). If you would like to request a Data Bank speaker at your event, please see the instructions and form on our Web site at <http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/forms/SpeakerEngagementRequest.pdf>. ❖

UPCOMING OUTREACH ACTIVITIES			
CONFERENCE	LOCATION	DATE	ROLE
Indiana Association of Medical Staff Services (IAMSS) Quarterly Educational Conference	Sullivan, IN	January 28, 2011	Speaker
AHLA Hospital and Health Systems Law Institute	Las Vegas, NV	February 10-11, 2011	Speaker
America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) Annual Policy Conference	Washington, DC	March 8-9, 2011	Exhibitor

DPDB Spotlight Shines on Compliance Activities

We're paying attention... We're here to help... We're focusing on completeness and accuracy... These are just a few of the messages frequently communicated since March 2010 by the Division of Practitioner Data Banks' (DPDB) staff to hundreds of officials managing State boards that regulate health professions. Staff worked directly with almost 950 boards in every State to improve the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of the information in the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB).

The Division's compliance plan is evolving. Initial activities focused primarily on State boards that appeared to have never reported on health professions that were licensed or certified by those boards. Subsequent activities focused on certain health profession boards that had reported to the Data Bank. The DPDB compared reports in the HIPDB with data obtained from State boards that license or certify nursing-related professions, physician assistants, podiatrists, pharmacists, social workers, and psychologists. The next phases of compliance activities will focus on physicians and dentists.

The results of these compliance activities were posted on the Data Bank Web site on July 1 and again on October 1, 2010. Future postings will occur periodically. To view the **Reporting Compliance Status of Government Agencies** and to obtain details regarding the process and definitions used in the report, please visit <http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/news/temp/reportingCompliance.jsp>.

A summary of the compliance status for July and October 2010 are detailed in *Table 1*. In July, 830 health profession boards were reviewed. Of those, 33% were compliant; 10% were non-compliant; 20% were working toward compliance; and 37% were under review.

In October, 896 health profession boards (including those reviewed in July) were reviewed. Of those, 67% were compliant; 12% were non-compliant; 16% were working toward compliance; and 5% were under review. In addition, 53 health profession boards listed as "under review" on the July 2010 posting were removed from the October 2010 posting after further analysis showed that those professions were not licensed or certified by their respective States.

These compliance activities have had a significant impact on Data Bank activities. From July 1 through September 30, 2010, 36,519 licensure reports were submitted to the Data Bank. During the sametime period in 2009, there were 10,266 reports submitted. Future compliance status updates will be posted on the Division's Web site. All of these activities are part of HRSA's continuing mission to protect the health and safety of the public.❖

Summary of Compliance Activities in 2010					
	Compliant	Non-Compliant	Working Towards Compliance	Under Review	Removed from List
July 2010	278 (33%)	81 (10%)	165 (20%)	306 (37%)	
October 2010	599 (67%)	105 (12%)	146 (16%)	46 (5%)	53

Table 1 details the compliance status for July and October 2010.

Helpful Hints

Multiple Entity Data Bank Administrators After Registration Renewal—After January 2011 when your organization renews its registration using identity-proofing you will have the option of establishing more than one Entity Data Bank Administrator. Also, Administrators will be able to assign specific roles to each user. For example, Entity Data Bank Administrators can specify that users have only querying privileges, or only reporting privileges, or they can assign some users a dual role. Also, the Administrator account will have the ability to perform user functions (i.e., report and query) in addition to Administrator functions.

Does Your Organization Use an Agent? If you use an agent to query and report on your behalf, your organization will be able to see the agent's activity (in addition to your own) in the monthly summary email you receive. Previously, you could not see your agent's reporting and querying transactions on your monthly summary. Many organizations requested this new enhancement, and we are happy to let you know that it will be available beginning January 24, 2011. ❖

On the Horizon

Please help us make reporting easier and less time-consuming. The Data Bank recently launched a usability study to improve the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS) based on input from our users. With the recent redesign of the Data Bank Web site (see the article, *What Do You Think About Our New Look?* on page 1), the next step is to improve and update the IQRS. The initial phase of the usability study will work with and observe IQRS users. The participants will provide feedback on what features they like and dislike in the system. Changes based on the usability study will make the IQRS easier to navigate for the novice to expert-level user. Stay tuned for our findings as the study progresses and the new IQRS takes shape. ❖

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