Department of Health Care Access and Information
2020 West El Camino Avenue, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95833
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

HEALTH CARE PAYMENTS DATA PROGRAM (HPD)

DATA RELEASE COMMITTEE (DRC)

Date:

September 5, 2023
Draft Meeting Minutes

Members Attending: Nuriel Moghavem, Clinical Instructor of Neurology; Paul Bouganim, Executive Director, Finance Operations; Miranda Dietz, Project Director, California Simulation of Insurance Markets microsimulation model (CalSIM); Cora Han, Chief Health Data Officer; Jan Hanley, Director of Research Programming; Terry Hill, Physician Consultant, Researcher, Writer; Koh Kerdsri, Vice President, Risk Adjustment, Compliance, and IT; Barbara Koenig, Professor Emerita of Bioethics; Daniel Ruiz, Vice President, Operations Quality.

Members not in attendance: Genia Fick, Vice President, Quality and Janet Coffman, Professor, Institute for Health Policy Studies.

HCAI Presenters: Chris Krawczyk, Chief Analytics Officer; Dionne Evans-Dean, Assistant Branch Chief; ‘Alim Beveridge, Cost and Quality Analysis Group Supervisor, HCAI; Tara Zimonjic, Chief Planning Officer; Merry Holliday-Hanson, Research Scientist Supervisor; Jonathan Mathieu, HCAI Consultant Freedman HealthCare

Public Attendance: 51

Agenda Item I: Welcome and Meeting Minutes
Nuriel Moghavem, DRC Chair

Nuriel Moghavem, DRC Chair, welcomed the committee and members of the public. Scott Christman, Chief Deputy Director for HCAI, administered the oath of office to Paul Bouganim, the new committee member. The committee members conducted a roll call and each member, including the newly introduced Paul Bouganim, briefly introduced themselves. The chair reviewed the meeting ground rules.

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The committee reviewed and approved the meeting minutes from the June 6, 2023, DRC Meeting. The motion was made by Terry Hill and seconded by Cora Han.

The following members voted to approve the minutes: Miranda Dietz, Cora Han, Terry Hill, Miranda Dietz, and Nuriel Moghavem.

Paul Bouganim, Jan Hanley, and Barbara Koenig abstained from voting.

Daniel Ruiz was absent from voting.

The motion to approve the minutes was carried by a vote of five in favor and three abstentions.

Questions and comments from the committee:

There were no questions from the committee.

Public comment:

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item II: HPD Program Updates and June Meeting Recap
Nuriel Moghavem, DRC Chair
Chris Krawczyk, Chief Analytics Officer, HCAI

The DRC Chair reviewed the content covered at the June 6 meeting and gave an update on his meeting with HPD Advisory Committee members. Chris Krawczyk reviewed the program updates, including the status of the data release regulations, public reporting priorities, and the anticipated topics for upcoming DRC meetings.

Questions and comments from the committee:

The committee discussed the need for committee members to stay abreast of HPD implementation status, including the release of new public reports, that could help them in their role of reviewing data access requests.

The committee discussed the data release regulation public comments and requested that the public comments be made available to committee members in their original format, noting that public comments may intersect with committee concerns and responsibilities. HCAI agreed to consult with legal counsel to determine how the comments can be shared.

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The committee requested that census and ZIP code be added to the HPD Measures Report. The committee was informed that additional geographic elements may be added later.

The committee asked whether applications would be accepted in January, the committee was informed that due to the multiple steps involved, including public comment periods and review by the Office of Administrative Law, the timeline to begin reviews may be delayed.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item III: HPD Data Quality Completeness Required for Analysis and Linkage
Dionne Evans-Dean, Assistant Branch Chief, HCAI
'Alim Beveridge, Cost and Quality Analysis Group Supervisor, HCAI

Dionne Evans-Dean gave an overview of data quality and completeness—including for medical services, pharmacy services, claims and encounter characteristics, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation and gender identity. 'Alim Beveridge discussed the data elements needed to perform analysis and linkage.

Questions and comments from the committee:

The committee discussed the importance of evaluating data quality when reviewing data request applications. They emphasized the need to understand what specific aspects of data quality, such as completeness and accuracy, are essential for assessing data requests. They note that data quality and completeness could be a factor in prioritizing which data access requests to review. The committee members highlighted the importance of identifying potential red flags in data quality. For instance, if certain data, like race and ethnicity information, appears suspect or has low quality, it should be communicated to requesters to save their time and prioritize resource and grant allocation appropriately. The committee expressed interest in benchmarking data quality against other states' all-payer claims databases (APCDs) and national standards to gain a better understanding of data completeness and accuracy.

The committee discussed the possibility of streamlining the process for accessing Medicare data, acknowledging that it could save both staff and applicants' time.

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There was a question regarding whether the matching logic used for member identification could be shared publicly. It was noted that the logic is based on some proprietary methodologies for which there may be restrictions on sharing.

The committee inquired about a testing period for the implementation of APCD-CDL Version 3. It was clarified that health plans can initiate testing, and training webinars will be provided in the late fall to winter.

There was a discussion about the pharmacy data quality, specifically regarding the relatively lower-than-expected percentage of National Provider Identifier data element completion. It was explained that the lower percentage was due to Medicare fee-for-service data, and the overall quality was better for commercial and the Department of Health Care Services' data.

The committee members suggested cataloging potential misuse scenarios for the data and discussing strategies to avoid such risks. The committee acknowledged the need for further discussion on data linkages, including the process, risk assessment, and potential downstream risks.

Public Comment:

A public attendee raised concerns about the validation and accuracy of encounter data, particularly when capitation data is not collected. They asked how the completeness and accuracy of encounter data costs can be maximized.

The committee acknowledged the importance of the public commenter's question and requested input from HCAI staff. The committee was informed that HCAI can monitor trends over time to assess data accuracy. While there is a presumption that the data received from plans and insurers is as accurate as possible, HCAI can track changes in the data as more information becomes available, allowing for trend analysis.

HCAI staff also mentioned that they are in the preliminary stages of collecting non-claims payment data, with an expected implementation date in 2025. This effort involves evaluating data formats and undergoing a regulatory process starting in 2024. This additional data will enhance accuracy.

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Agenda Item IV: Draft DRC Board Manual Review
Tara Zimonjic, Chief Planning Officer, HCAI
Merry Holliday-Hanson, Research Scientist Supervisor, HCAI
Jonathan Mathieu, Freedman HealthCare

Tara Zimonjic gave an overview of the development process component of the manual and board operations. Jonathan Mathieu reviewed the board manual and the criteria for board decision making and lead a discussion on needs and clarifications. Merry Holliday-Hanson gave an overview of the application review process.

Questions and comments from the committee:

The committee praised the well-written manual and reiterated the need to continually emphasize the purpose and benefits of the processes outlined in the manual.

The committee inquired about the request evaluation process and asked whether numeric scores or categories would be used and whether reviewers could revise their scores after discussions. HCAI staff highlighted the legal and regulatory limitations on what can be included in the board manual. It was emphasized that the manual should focus on internal procedures rather than specific criteria or rules for applicants. The committee also expressed confusion about the use of terminology related to HIPAA limited data sets and suggested establishing consistent language for clarity.

The committee discussed what information should be included in the public version of the agenda, such as the titles of applications, names of researchers, and potential topics for public comment. The committee considered the inclusion of public comments for each application and discussed whether applicants should be required to provide presentations or information on anti-competitive use. The committee discussed whether applicants should be required to virtually attend meetings to respond to questions about their applications. While some members recommended making it a requirement, others suggested making it a strong recommendation, as some applicants might face challenges with attendance. It was suggested that primary reviewers could forward questions to applicants directly, but it was emphasized that negotiations or back-and-forth discussions should be avoided. The committee discussed whether primary reviewers should prepare key questions for applicants in advance or raise them during the meeting. It was noted that the primary reviewer's presentation to the full DRC could include these questions.

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The committee raised the issue of succession planning for the chair position, proposing the idea of having a vice-chair. The discussion touched on how to handle the chair's absence or conflicts. The committee discussed the term lengths for members and the importance of knowing whether members are serving one- or two-year terms. It was suggested that members provide advance notice for if they plan to step down.

The committee inquired about the distribution of applications among primary reviewers. The committee discussed whether there should be a maximum number of applications per reviewer or if it should be distributed evenly. The possibility of reviewing applications in advance and submitting questions to the applicants before the meeting was discussed.

The need for a template or standardized process for closeout reports was discussed to ensure consistency and efficiency in documenting the committee's decisions. There was some discussion about the majority quorum rule. Jonathan Mathieu clarified that the committee's quorum rule differs from the usual majority definition, and it was agreed that the issue required further clarification. The committee emphasized that the committee would need to adapt and refine its processes as it gained experience.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item V. Next Meeting Topics TIME
Nuriel Moghavem, DRC Chair

Nuriel Moghavem provided a preview of the November DRC meeting agenda, including:

- Review of previous DRC discussions
- Adopt DRC board manual
- Review of overall data release process, including
    - User fees
    - Data Use Agreement
    - Criteria for decision making
    - Data Request Portal
    - Research Data Enclave

The next meeting will be held on November 7 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and will be a hybrid meeting.

Questions and comments from the committee:

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The committee was notified that 2024 schedule will be addressed in an upcoming meeting.

Agenda Item VI: Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda
Nuriel Moghavem, DRC Chair

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.