

SPARCS Update

New York State Department of Health

March 2014

Office of Quality and Patient Safety

Compliance and Quality Improvement

Annual Renewals of SPARCS Data Agreements

Regarding annual renewals of SPARCS data agreements for vendors submitting SPARCS data on behalf of a healthcare facility:

Vendor agreements are required for an external organization to submit SPARCS data on behalf of a healthcare facility. The SPARCS renewal protocol previously required a new notarized vendor agreement to be completed annually. For 2014, SPARCS is modifying the vendor renewal protocol as follows:

1. Vendor agreements no longer need to be notarized. Electronic copies—either scanned or faxed—will be accepted.
2. Existing Vendors: If there is no change in the vendor agreement currently on file with the Department, SPARCS will only require an attestation e-mail from both the vendor and the healthcare facility stating the vendor agreement continues unchanged for the current renewal year. The process will be initiated by the SPARCS staff with an e-mail to both the organizational representatives of the healthcare facility and the vendor, requesting an attestation statement. If the signers of either document are no longer able to sign for the organization, a new vendor agreement will be required.
3. New Vendors: For new external vendors, the healthcare facility should contact SPARCS Operations (sparcs@health.state.ny.us) to ascertain if the prospective vendor is registered as a commercial entity on the Health Commerce System (HCS). Registration is required before starting the vendor agreement process. Once the external vendor is registered on the HCS, a DOH-4388 SPARCS Data Agreement Notification Form needs to be submitted (<http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/forms/>). The only acceptable signers of this document are those

Table of Contents

Compliance and Quality Improvement

- Annual Renewals of SPARCS Data Agreements
- SPARCS Compliance
- Revised SPARCS Present on Admission Reporting (2009-2012)

Data Collection, Storage, and Release

- ICD-10
- SPARCS Data Release: Limited and Identifiable

Training Sessions

- SPARCS Reporting Requirements: Expanded Race and Ethnicity

representatives that are legally permitted to sign for the organization.

SPARCS Compliance

Monthly Reminder

Healthcare facilities must submit at least 95 percent of their total SPARCS inpatient discharges and outpatient visits within 60 days from the end of the month of a patient's discharge or visit. A monthly reminder will be sent to the SPARCS coordinators of healthcare facilities that failed to submit sufficient SPARCS data by the end of February 2014 for outpatient visits or inpatient discharges that ended in the month of **December 2013**.

Annual Reconciliation

Current SPARCS regulations require the submission of 100% of inpatient, ambulatory surgery, and emergency department SPARCS data 180 days from the end of the calendar year. All 2013 SPARCS data is due by June 30, 2014. The *Annual Reconciliation* is the SPARCS process that implements this protocol. The calendar for the *2013 Annual Reconciliation* process is as follows:

- In March 2014, SPARCS staff will contact the SPARCS coordinators of those healthcare facilities that have SPARCS records that are less than their monthly target after the upload to the SPARCS Master File on March 4, 2014. The monthly target is generally 80% of the previous year's monthly average SPARCS records. A lesser percentage, 75% of the previous year's monthly average SPARCS records, is allowed for those months that the healthcare facility has historically shown to have low patient volumes. SPARCS coordinators should review the March 2014 Compliance Report that shows the number of records submitted by March 4, 2014 and their monthly targets. The Compliance Report is found on the public website at <http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/audit.htm>.
- After the April 2014 upload to the Master file is complete, a warning e-mail will be sent the first week of April to SPARCS coordinators of the facilities not meeting the 80/75% threshold (for any month). SPARCS coordinators should review the April Compliance Report. If there is a valid reason for the lesser number of patient records the SPARCS coordinators should submit a request for an exception through the SPARCS Bureau Mail Log sparcs@health.state.ny.us. Vendor issues are not an acceptable reason for an exception request.
- After the May 2014 upload to the Master file is complete those facilities that continue to have deficiencies will receive a second warning letter. This letter will be sent to the healthcare facility's C.E.O. or administrator with copies to the SPARCS coordinators. The warning letter states that all data is due by June 30, 2014. Facilities that require additional time beyond the due date may request a one-month extension with a new due date, July 31, 2014. SPARCS coordinators should make this request through the SPARCS Bureau Mail Log, sparcs@health.state.ny.us. SPARCS allows one additional one-month extension for facilities requiring more time to submit data with a new due date, August 29, 2014.
- After the July 2014 upload to the Master file or the upload in the next month after an extension due date, a certified letter is sent to the C.E.O. or the administrator stating that their facility will be

issued a Statement of Deficiencies (SOD).

An SOD will be sent to the facility's C.E.O. or administrator by certified mail. A Plan of Corrective Action (POC) is required within two weeks of the facility's receipt of the SOD.

Revised SPARCS Present on Admission Reporting (2009-2012)

SPARCS Present on Admission Reporting (2009-2012) is being revised to clarify that the intent of this report is to alert facilities about potential problems and to provide feedback for researchers and policy makers. Although a facility may not have met a given criteria, this does not necessarily mean that a POA reporting issue exists.

Data Collection, Storage, and Release

ICD-10

The conversion to ICD-10 is fast approaching. As previously stated, the Department's policy decision made on the reporting of ICD-10 remains the same.

- For discharge dates on or after October 1, 2014, submitters must use ICD-10 diagnosis codes for all records and ICD-10 procedure codes for Inpatient.
- No exceptions, including if an insurer type (e.g., Worker's Compensation) can still use ICD-9.

For a facility to be able to submit records, they need to map the ICD-9 to an ICD-10.

SPARCS Data Release: Limited and Identifiable

All requests for limited and identifiable data should be submitted to dprb@health.state.ny.us.

The following organizations received SPARCS data files in February 2014:

Organization	Data File Type	Years Approved
Gold Health Strategies	Identifiable	2011
Health Quest	Limited	2010-2013
NY Presbyterian Hospital	Limited	1982-2013
NY Presbyterian Hospital Regulatory Planning	Limited	2012-2013
NY University, Furman Center for Real Estate	Limited	2012
Roosevelt Hospital	Limited	2004-2012
Strong Memorial Hospital	Identifiable	2004
The Sage Colleges, School of Management	Limited	2010-2013
Truven Health Analytics	Limited	2014-2017
Truven Health Analytics	Identifiable	2013
Vermont Department of Health	Limited	2012
WebMD, Inc.	Limited	2012

The complete list of approved identifiable data requests is maintained on the Department's website:
http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/dprb/approved_data_req.htm

Training Sessions

SPARCS Reporting Requirements: Expanded Race and Ethnicity

The webinar *SPARCS Reporting Requirements: Expanded Race and Ethnicity* was presented on Thursday, March 6, 2014 by the Healthcare Association of New York State. A recording of this event is available by visiting <http://ehanys.com/demonstration/> and selecting "SPARCS Reporting Requirements: Expanded Race and Ethnicity."

We welcome comments and feedback.

SPARCS Operations

New York State Department of Health
Office of Quality and Patient Safety
Bureau of Health Informatics
Empire State Plaza
Corning Tower, Room 878
Albany, New York 12237

Phone: (518) 473-8144

Fax: (518) 486-3518

Information: sparcs@health.state.ny.us

Data Access: dprb@health.state.ny.us

SPARCS Update newsletters are distributed electronically to individuals who have Health Commerce System (HCS) data upload access, subscribers to SPARCS-L, and other interested parties upon request. Updates are also available online at: <http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/info.htm>