



What is Syndromic Surveillance?

Syndromic surveillance is the analysis of medical data to detect or anticipate disease outbreaks. According to a CDC definition, "the term 'syndromic surveillance' applies to surveillance using health-related data that precede diagnosis and signal a sufficient probability of a case or an outbreak to warrant further public health response."

What is Meaningful Use?

In 2009 as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Congress authorized more than \$25 billion in incentive payments to hospitals and health-care providers to facilitate the adoption of meaningful use of certified electronic health records (EHRs). Incentive payments of up to \$44,000 through the Medicare incentive program, or \$63,750 through the Medicaid incentive program, can be made to eligible professions and hospitals. To receive incentive payments, providers must meet and maintain a set of meaningful use measures using a certified EHR. Meaningful use employs a three-stage approach, with each stage building on the preceding stage. To demonstrate stage one of meaningful use, an eligible professional must comply with 15 "core" requirements and five of 10 "menu" requirements. For more information on the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs, visit www.cms.gov/ehrincentiveprograms/.

How does Syndromic Surveillance Affect Meaningful Use Requirements?

Improving population health through early detection of disease is a goal of the EHR incentive program. Attainment of this goal will be realized through establishment of connectivity between EHRs and state or local Syndromic Surveillance systems. North Dakota currently has a statewide surveillance system located at the North Dakota Department of Health. Submission of syndromic data is one of the ten "menu" requirements available to satisfy meaningful use criteria. **North Dakota is able and willing to accept a syndromic surveillance message from all eligible providers (hospital and ambulatory) looking to fulfill their public health requirement for Meaningful Use stages one and two.** Syndromic Surveillance messaging through EHRs is supported by the North Dakota Health Information Technology (HIT) Advisory Committee and is included in the North Dakota HIT Strategic and Operational Plan. For more information about North Dakota HIT, visit www.healthit.nd.gov/.

What is the Status of Syndromic Surveillance Messaging with EHRs?

The North Dakota Department of Health's syndromic system can connect with EHRs in one of two ways: Via direct connection utilizing Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) messaging, or through a connection with the North Dakota Health Information Network (HIN). The North Dakota Department of Health is making available to all eligible providers an implementation guide that lays out the required data elements for North Dakota as part of meaningful use requirements. Upon successful testing, the North Dakota Department of Health will help facilitate the ongoing transfer of these messages to the North Dakota Syndromic Surveillance system.

What is the Syndromic Surveillance-EHR Testing Process?

The North Dakota Department of Health has published an HL7 2.5.1 implementation guide for which messaging standards are defined. This document is available at:

<http://www.ndhealth.gov/disease/SS/Docs/NDSSMessagingGuide.pdf>.

Once you feel you are ready to test a message for certification, please contact the North Dakota Department of Health to start that process.

If your organization is interested in testing or connecting for meaningful use certification, please e-mail the following six items to jbaber@nd.gov or submit the online interest form:

1. Organization Name and Address
2. Individual National Provider Identifier (NPIs) or Medicare Certification Number
3. Contact Person Name, Position, E-mail address, Phone Number
4. EHR Name and Version Number
5. Version(s) of HL7 supported by your EHR
6. Can your EHR already create a Syndromic Surveillance Message (any version of HL7)?

Additional Information

Additional information is available at www.ndhealth.gov/disease/mu or by calling the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2180.

