
**Managed Care Organizations as Data Providers
for National Syndromic Surveillance Systems:
Motivations, Value and Concerns**

**Andrew Nelson, MPH
HealthPartners Research Foundation
October 24, 2003**

Objectives

- Explain the motivations behind health plans contribution of data to syndromic surveillance systems
- Express concerns health plans have with the exposure of this private and confidential data
- Identify the value and importance of continuing these data contributions

The National Bioterrorism Syndromic Surveillance Demonstration Program

- Daily extracts of health care encounters from a population base of 20 million individuals
- Report daily counts of patients with new illnesses and retain patient level data for investigation
- Identify unusual clusters of illness and notify health departments
- Provide additional information to health departments and CDC as needed



Partnerships (lead by Dr. Richard Platt)

Health Plans/Medical Groups in association with their respective state/local health departments, CDC and DOD / Advisory Group

Funding

CDC and members of partnership

Origins

HMO Research Network

CDC and health departments pilot projects

Distributed Data Model

Data privacy and proprietary data protections

Motivations

- Contribution to mission
- Social dividend
- Patriotism
- Research organizations within health plans
- Health improvement and disease prevention
- Capacity planning and surge preparation

Value

- Partnerships between health departments and health plans
- Daily national population view of health encounters
- Utility of new knowledge within care delivery systems
- Integration of research and practice
- National security / law enforcement
- Data privacy protections
- Response capacity

Concerns

- Patient level data privacy
- Sharing of proprietary information
- Partnership between health plans and public health
- The many voices of public health and government stakeholders
- Utility and integration of knowledge
- Next steps: evolution of methods to use