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**Date:** May 13, 2011

**To:** All Users of Public Release Arizona Hospital Inpatient Discharge Data

**From:** Donna Courtney, Hospital Data Manager, Bureau of Public Health Statistics

**Subject:** Issues affecting Arizona 2010-02 Inpatient data

For the 2010-02 reporting period and later data, the layout of the Arizona hospital discharge data records has been changed by the addition of two new data elements, *ED Admission Flag* and *Visit Qualifier*. Specifications of these data elements are located in the accompanying data layouts and Section C extract of the state reporting manual (see packing list). Following is a brief explanation of these changes.

The *ED Admission Flag* data element was created in response to changes made at the national level. Effective July 1, 2010, the National Uniform Billing Committee (NUBC) made a series of changes to the Point of Origin code set (formerly known as "Source of Admission"), including elimination of code "7 – Emergency Room." The reasoning behind this change is that patients do not "originate" in the emergency room – rather, they come from a location outside the reporting hospital, which this data element is intended to capture.

In response to concerns by various states and other entities regarding the elimination of this code, the NUBC created a new Condition Code, P7, for the purpose of indicating a patient was treated in the ED prior to admission. Arizona adopted this Condition Code for all inpatient discharges on/after July 1, 2010. The "P7" code appears in the Arizona inpatient records in the data element *ED Admission Flag*, when applicable, to indicate the patient was treated in the emergency room prior to admission as an inpatient.

The *Visit Qualifier* data element was created to address two different data collection problems. Specifically, 1) ED to IP admissions on which the records are split at the reporting hospital (usually Critical Access Hospitals); and, 2) ED to Observation or ED to outpatient care records (with no associated IP admission), which were not being consistently reported to the state across all hospitals.

In the inpatient records, population of the *Visit Qualifier* data element with a value of "S" indicates that the patient was treated in the ED prior to admission as an inpatient but, due to splitting of the records for billing purposes, the particulars of the ED care are reported in a separate record in the ED data set. For these records, both the *ED Admission Flag* of "P7" and the *Visit Qualifier* of "S" will be populated.

Completeness and accuracy of reporting these two new data elements was audited and evaluated during collection. For this first reporting period, there are some deficiencies in both completeness and accuracy. The issues underlying the identified deficiencies are being addressed moving forward. Improvement in the quality of these two elements to an acceptable level is anticipated for the next (2011-01) reporting period.

On another issue of data quality, the Present on Admission indicators reported by hospital MED3488 have errors which were impossible to correct. Specifically, many of the indicators "1" and "U" are erroneous, and therefore should not be relied upon for any analyses. This issue will be resolved in the next (2011-01) reporting period.

Please contact our office with any questions or concerns regarding these issues or anything else related to Arizona hospital discharge data.