



Frequently Asked Questions Series

Obtaining Patient Outcome Data for Quality Improvement Initiatives

Question: Is a non-transporting EMS agency able to obtain information on the patient's condition from the transporting EMS agency (air or ground)?

Answer: Yes. A non-transporting EMS agency that provided treatment to a patient can request, and the transporting EMS agency can provide, patient information to the extent that the information requested pertains to the treatment provided by the non-transporting EMS agency; or the information requested is for the purpose of conducting utilization review, peer review, or quality assurance (QA). This is limited to the minimum necessary information reasonably necessary to accomplish the purpose for which the request is made. [ARS § 12-2294](#); [ARS § 36-509](#); [45 CFR § 164.502\(a\)\(1\)\(ii\)](#); [45 CFR § 164.506](#); [45 CFR § 164.514](#).

Question: I have heard that obtaining outcome data is only permitted when we bill for our services electronically, is that true?

Answer: No. Certain provisions of US Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) are related to the electronic transmission of data, but the eligibility of a qualified EMS provider to access patient outcome data does not require electronic billing. You are limited to the minimum amount of data as is described above.

Question: Can the Bureau obtain outcome data from hospitals as part of its QA efforts and report these data to EMS agencies?

Answer: Yes, because the Bureau is a "public health authority" authorized to collect and use these data in its statutorily identified quality improvement initiatives.

Question: Can my Administrative Medical Director or Base Hospital EMS Coordinator request and review outcome data as part of our EMS agency's quality improvement process?

Answer: Yes, to the extent that these individuals have a legal relationship (direct employment or contract) with your agency with defined roles and responsibilities within your QI process.