SEER*DMS Change Control Board (CCB) Users Group
Teleconference Summary
February 9, 2017
3:00 p.m. to 4:00 EST

Representatives from NCI, IMS and 14 SEER registries participated in the SEER*DMS CCB Users Group conference call on February 9, 2017. Participants included:

Registries:
Alaska
Cherokee Nation
Connecticut
Detroit
Georgia
Hawaii
Iowa
Kentucky
Louisiana
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
Seattle
Utah

NCI: Peggy Adamo, Lois Dickie, Marina Matatova
IMS: Suzanne Adams, Linda Coyle, Chuck May, Nicki Schussler, David Annette
SCG: Kathy Brown-Huamani, rapporteur

Action Items

Participants agreed to the following action items:

- IMS will notify registries about the new feature in System Task for geocoding to enter the full block value for cases prior to 2012.
- IMS will develop a design document for the proposed MU2 workflow to be reviewed by NCI staff and CCB members.
- Registries should review the Electronic Mapping, Reporting, and Coding (eMaRC) software to become familiar with its functionality in preparation for future discussions about eMaRC.
- IMS is seeking ideas from registries about improving their involvement in the CCB and improving communication between registries.
- Registries should provide suggestions for how IMS/NCI could organize Tiger teams focusing on SEER*DMS reports by replying to the relevant Squish issue.
- Linda agreed to work with NCI participants to plan the Tiger teams that would guide new SEER*DMS report capabilities.
- Participants should propose topics for upcoming CCB calls via Squish or email.

Improving Registry Involvement in CCB

An evaluation revealed that many registries want to be more actively involved in the CCB. IMS and NCI are seeking ways to increase registry involvement in the CCB without over-burdening registry staff. Possible methods for increasing registry involvement include:

- Surveys conducted via Squish (as in the past) or via new technologies. IMS is interested in identifying and testing new technologies that might provide a more efficient and effective method for conducting surveys with registry staff. For example, polls could be enabled during webcasts.
- Debriefing forums to capture thoughts after calls end.
- Using Squish in new ways.
- Tiger teams for small to medium groups and short-term projects directed at accomplishing a specific task. Tiger teams might be useful for examining ways to use the National Provider ID or auto-linking.
- Work Groups such as MU2 for larger groups and longer term projects. NCI staff would like to be involved in these groups and help to administer them.

An important goal will be to improve inter-registry communication. IMS and NCI participants would like ideas from the registries for improving registry involvement in the CCB as well as collaboration with other registries.

Discussion

One participant noted that a good tool for communicating about specific topics is SharePoint.

Improving SEER*DMS Reports

IMS is adding new system reports and improving extracts. It is difficult to discuss reports during CCB calls, so it might be more effective to submit questions or describe needs for processes and tools in Squish or some other written format. Participants suggested examining the number of reports that are generated by SEER*DMS that are not used. IMS periodically checks report usage and removes reports that are not being used.

IMS staff want to add reports and data searches to SEER*DMS. Linda suggested that registries periodically identify a few reports that they think are interesting. During CCB calls, registries could describe some reports they use and explain why those reports are important and useful. This approach would help IMS prioritize reports to add to the system. The CCB, a Tiger team, or a work group could take responsibility for identifying, selecting, and prioritizing useful reports. Such a group also could examine the Report Manager and determine better ways to organize reports in SEER*DMS.

Discussion

Participants noted that a Tiger team might be the most appropriate format for examining SEER*DMS reports. During the course of 3 to 5 meetings, Tiger teams could examine the reports being used in SEER*DMS and generate basic statistics on frequency of use of each kind of report. Participants generally agreed that a Tiger team should focus on a specific category of report (e.g., examine what registries do to report productivity). Tiger teams also could collect information on what the various registries do to create specific types of reports to determine ways to generate these reports in SEER*DMS. Information about best practices, processes, and tools used by individual registries for specific types of reports also could be shared with other registries. Participants from New Jersey, Georgia, Utah, Connecticut, New Mexico, Kentucky, and Detroit registries expressed interest in being involved in this effort. Linda asked that participants consider the categories of reports that could be the focus of different Tiger teams. She suggested that productivity be the first report category addressed by a Tiger team because she hears about this kind of report most often. Participants generally agreed with this suggestion.

Auto-Consolidation of Tumor-Level Fields

IMS wants to add rules for tumor-level auto-consolidation and approve the rules they have for demographic fields. IMS is studying documentation from two registries (Florida and Kentucky) to ensure that SEER*DMS has the technical infrastructure necessary to support a variety of rules. Different registries implement different rules.

A CCB Work Group on Auto-Consolidation is planned and will be co-chaired by Bobbi Matt and Frances Ross. The Work Group will include Serban Negoita and Peggy Adamo (NCI), Linda Coyle and Fabian Depry (IMS), and Mireille Lemieux, Patrick Nicolin, and possibly Nancy Lozon. The members of this Work Group want to complement ongoing similar efforts such as the NAACCR Tumor Auto-Consolidation Work Group. Another participant (name not specified) indicated that she also was interested in joining the CCB Auto-Consolidation Work Group. She recommended further discussion about ways for the CCB Auto-Consolidation Work Group to collaborate with the NAACCR Auto-Consolidation Work Group and other similar efforts.

Using AFLs and Other SEER*DMS Data in SEER*Abs

SEER abstracting tools allow for the creation of a worklist in SEER*Abs, which can be populated from the central registry database. Abstractors can choose whether or not to auto-fill fields during abstracting.

The Iowa registry staff use SEER*Abs and maintain it at the registry. This registry creates custom worklists in SEER*Abs. The New Mexico registry also has a custom worklist. Utah and Hawaii registries import AFLs from SEER*DMS but do not perform significant customization. Detroit and Seattle do not create worklists in SEER*Abs, but use a different method for providing abstractors with a casefinding list. Linda would like to know how other registries create worklists in SEER*Abs, what other abstracting software they use, which fields are made available to abstractors, and which fields are auto-filled.

Discussion

A participant from Iowa added that abstractors at her registry obtain the data file from the registry's database. The AFLs that are generated by SEER*DMS complete fields for hospital referred to and from. AFLs are generated based on this information and sent to the field staff at the appropriate facility. The AFLs are created within SEER*DMS and Iowa registry staff query SEER*DMS for the necessary AFLs, lookups, facility and physician information, and NAACCR records that have been successfully imported into SEER*DMS. Abstractors import this information into SEER*Abs. They can choose whether or not to create an abstract. Abstractors add a comment explaining why certain cases are not abstracted and create AFLs for information that was not abstracted.

Abstractors at the Iowa registry currently do not receive AFLs generated from the DCOs, but the Iowa registry plans for abstractors to receive those AFLs in the future. The ePath casefinding list for the Iowa registry is generated outside of SEER*DMS.

If abstractors work within a registry's firewall, they can access SEER*DMS to obtain AFLs. Some large registries assign different abstractors to different AFLs.

Topics for the March CCB Meeting

- New field to collect true PSA values.
- Patterns of Care automation.
- Completeness for November submission.

- Tiger teams for reports.
- Work group update.

Discussion

Participants discussed ways to poll registries for agenda items and other issues. Squish allows users to enter comments, which can be viewed by all other users. IMS has used Squish to poll registries.

With regard to the auto-linkage on the DEV server at four registries, IMS updated servers today and made changes. Linda will update the Squish issue on this topic today. The four participating registries can determine whether they would like a followup meeting.

Announcements

Status of Social Security Administration (SSA) Linkage for SEER Registries

IMS sent 16 files to SSA for 2017 in multiple batches over the past 3 months. Six batches still need to be received by IMS. SSA will not return any files until the beginning of March, at the earliest.

Preparing for February SEER Submission

Extracts have been audited for the February 2017 SEER submission. IMS is adding fields, which will be included in a release that registries should receive before February 20. Registries should not finalize their February submission files until the fields have been added.

IMS has the goal of making the extracts in SEER*DMS data driven. This year, IMS plans to make changes so that SEER*DMS uses a file that indicates the fields that need to be written and produces the required information for posting on the web site.

Geocoding Issues and Meetings

IMS is working on documenting recent registry experiences with the AGGIE geocoder. Problems with AGGIE results were reported by New York, Georgia, and New Jersey registries. The source of the problem appears to lie in the data sources used by AGGIE.

IMS and the three registries reached out to the NAACCR work group that handles concerns with the AGGIE geocoder. Registries might be interested in joining this work group if they have concerns about AGGIE.

IMS is implementing changes in SEER*DMS to prevent problems with AGGIE geocoding and provide more tools for analyzing AGGIE results. For example, IMS wants to use the AGGIE development server on the SEER*DMS test server before AGGIE changes go into production. SEER*DMS also will store more metadata coming from AGGIE so that registries can analyze and check results. In addition, SEER*DMS will show the match score in the geocoder pop up. IMS already has added a feature to turn off geocoding as well as a new configuration parameter that allows users to set a threshold for values received from AGGIE.

Every registry uses AGGIE to geocode and set census tracts. When the NAACCR work group indicates that the issues with AGGIE have been resolved, geocoding can be redone at the registries for certain time periods to determine whether values have changed. NCI staff would like to know which registries make extensive use of data generated by AGGIE.

Updating Census Tract Block When Missing or Incomplete

In 2012, the Census Block field changed to include the full block value instead of just the block group value. IMS added a feature in System Task for geocoding to enter the full block value for cases prior to 2012 without changing census tract values. IMS is working with the Seattle and Louisiana registries to test this new feature this week. IMS will then reach out to staff at other registries who might be interested in testing this feature. IMS has created a Squish issue about this feature.

MU2 Work Group Update

The MU2 Work Group met on February 2, 2017. The Work Group recommended a workflow similar to the Claims workflow. IMS will develop a design document for review by the NCI and CCB. The Louisiana registry provided data for a possible prototype of the proposed MU2 work flow. IMS created a new Squish issue type to track issues specific to the MU2 Work Group activities.

The next SEER*DMS called is scheduled for Thursday, March 9, 2017, at 3:00 p.m. EST.