

SEER*DMS Change Control Board (CCB) Users Group
Teleconference Summary
March 16, 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 March 16, 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, Carol Kosary, Marina Matatova

IMS: Suzanne Adams, Linda Coyle, Scott Depew, Chuck May, Nicki Schussler

SCG: Kathy Brown-Huamani, rapporteur

Action Items

Participants agreed to the following action items:

- IMS will begin sending registries a list of database accounts that might need to be deactivated.
- IMS/NCI staff will share some results of the questionnaire about the SEER*DMS review report during an upcoming CCB call.
- IMS will provide the five registries participating in the MPH auto-link testing with data that can be searched to evaluate MPH and examine automatically linked records. Once registries have examined the data, Linda would like to organize a call with staff from those registries.
- IMS will add completeness criteria to the DQP in SEER*DMS. The first few submissions will not be scored using these criteria, but the criteria will generate feedback for the registries.
- The agenda for the July in-person meeting likely will be discussed during the April CCB call.
- Registries should let Carol Kosary know the number of staff members who will travel to the in-person meeting.

User Account Audits

IMS conducts regular audits of SEER*DMS user accounts to minimize security risks and adhere to National Institute of Standards and Technologies requirements. IMS regularly sends a list of accounts that have not been used in the past 6 months to registry managers and/or security officers. Registry managers and security officers are responsible for eliminating accounts when the user no longer needs to use SEER*DMS. Registry managers and/or security officers should:

- Notify IMS when VPN credentials no longer are needed.
- Deactivate accounts not assigned to a specific person (i.e., dummy accounts).

- Define procedures for deactivating users' accounts when the user is assigned to a different project or no longer employed at the registry. It is better to deactivate an account and then reactivate it when it is needed, than to leave an unused account active.

IMS is developing an option for registries to have accounts automatically deactivated if they have not been used for a certain period. Registries will be able to configure this option and specify the time period. Registries should let IMS know if they want automatic deactivation of unused accounts.

IMS will begin sending registries a list of database accounts that might need to be deactivated. These accounts are used to log into the Postgres database, but staff only need them when using certain applications such as Workbench, Crystal Reports, or SAS; and service accounts. IMS is working with registries to reduce use of the Postgres database. As part of this effort, they have generated the following recommendations for registries:

- Minimize external access. Accounts should not be provided if the use case is covered by SEER*DMS features such as Data Search, System Reports, and Custom Extracts.
- Restrict the use of "service" accounts to registry-maintained systems that access the SEER*DMS database.
- Eliminate "shared" accounts. Each person must have his or her own account to facilitate auditing by IMS.
- Enforce strong password requirements.

Discussion

Participants indicated that they want an automatic warning to notify the registry manager of unused accounts prior to automatic deactivation. IMS can create this warning but will not auto-deactivate an account without a request from the registry.

The database account audit will not affect SEER*Stat accounts. It will affect service accounts needed to access the data warehouse.

IMS will not enable password expiration at this time but will make this an option in the future.

Limiting External Access to Production Data

IMS recently implemented a measure to automatically kill queries that exceed maximum resources on the SEER*DMS production database to avoid a negative impact on SEER*DMS performance. IMS also is working on allowing registry schemas in a mirrored database so that staff can access the warehouse without accessing production data. Actions that registries can take to avoid external use of the production database negatively affecting SEER*DMS performance include:

- Developing a long-term plan to reduce production database usage. IMS can work with registries to develop these plans.
- Review processes to determine whether they require up-to-the-minute data or can use a data snapshot.
- Determine whether the registry still needs to employ a user schema by examining requirements related to tables in this schema.

SEER*DMS Review – Registry Survey

NCI staff distributed a questionnaire on the SEER*DMS review report. IMS and NCI staff are reviewing questionnaire responses. Most respondents indicated that they found the report useful. IMS/NCI staff will share some results of the questionnaire during an upcoming CCB call.

MU2 Work Group

The MU2 Work Group recommended a workflow similar to the Claims workflow. Currently, MU2s are being loaded into the SEER*DMS database. The Work Group is mapping the files to an intermediate structure. The next step will be to generate statistics on the set of MU2s provided by the Louisiana registry for testing the new workflow.

IMS plans to post the MU2 data on hosted DEV servers. A data viewer also has been identified. IMS will post information about the data viewer as a Tech Support Squish Issue.

All data cannot be stored in SEER*DMS, so the Work Group will propose fields to include. Registries will be able to provide feedback on this proposal. The Work Group can add or remove fields as needed.

Productivity Report Tiger Team

A Tiger team has been formed to review the SEER*DMS productivity report process. The team will compile statistics on productivity report use, collect information on what the various registries do to create this report, and identify best practices, processes, and tools.

The Tiger team scheduled a meeting on March 30, 2017. Seattle and Georgia registries have templates to share with the team as examples. The team is examining user productivity, primarily editing staff productivity.

Auto Linking

IMS is resuming work on auto-linking. Five registries are testing new versions of SEER*DMS where records would be auto-linked to CTCs in the workflow. IMS also added a system task that can be used to verify the MPH rules. This task runs the MPH rules across the database, compares records to the CTCs to which they are linked, and then generates a result if the MPH rules find a match.

Utah registry tests determined that when staff use MPH rules, they do not want to auto-link hematopoietic diseases. IMS, therefore, is providing an option to exclude hematopoietic diseases.

IMS will provide the five registries participating in the MPH auto-link testing with data that can be searched to evaluate MPH and examine automatically linked records. Once registries have examined the data, Linda would like to organize a call with staff from those registries.

IMS is considering implementing a procedure for routing manual tasks performed to decide whether a record is a new or existing tumor. Records would be sent to CTRs with different levels of expertise, depending on the complexity of the record.

Discussion

Participants want an option in Matching to match or consolidate. This button exists but is turned off. If registries want this button, IMS can turn it on in the registry's test server.

Showing New Completeness Measures in SEER*DMS

IMS and NCI staff will meet to discuss completeness measures. Completeness criteria will be added to the DQP in SEER*DMS. The first few submissions will not be scored using these criteria, but the criteria will produce feedback for the registries. NCI staff will announce when these criteria will be used in scoring submissions.

Announcements

- IMS received linkage data for one registry from the Social Security Administration (SSA).
- NCI is working to revise the SSA Interagency Agreement to allow registries to share SSA-SEER linked data.
- The Minnesota cancer registry will begin using SEER*DMS on May 1, 2017. Linda expects that staff from this registry will join the next CCB call and attend the in-person meeting in July.
- The Kentucky Cancer Registry will begin using SEER*DMS in 2018.
- The SEER in-person meeting is scheduled for July 12-14, 2017 (last day will be a half-day meeting). The CCB likely will discuss the agenda for this meeting during the April CCB call. Registries should let Carol Kosary know the number of staff members who will travel to the meeting.

The next SEER*DMS called is scheduled for Thursday, April 13, 2017, at 3:00 p.m. EST.