

National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) Data Use Agreements (DUAs) Public-facing Stand Operating Procedure (SOP)  
1.25.2018

If your Health Department (HD) seeks to initiate or renew a Data Use Agreement (DUA) with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to gain access to National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) data reported by healthcare facilities in your jurisdiction, please review the following resources and contact [NHSNDUA@cdc.gov](mailto:NHSNDUA@cdc.gov):

- a. CDC website for background information on the DUA: <http://www.cdc.gov/NHSN/about-nhsn/DUA.html>
  - b. CDC website for the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the DUA: <http://www.cdc.gov/NHSN/about-nhsn/DUA-FAQ.html>
- 1) After you submit your DUA inquiry to [NHSNDUA@cdc.gov](mailto:NHSNDUA@cdc.gov), staff in CDC's Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion (DHQP) will reply to the designated contact in your health department to schedule an introductory conference call or DUA renewal call. This call should include the HAI Coordinator or other HD stakeholders in NHSN data. Discussions with DHQP staff about initiating a DUA will include a review of the types of data that are accessible via a DUA, requirements for completing and operationalizing a DUA, and options for accessing NHSN data. In some instances, an option for accessing NHSN data other than via a DUA may be a better fit with a HD's needs.
  - 2) If the HD seeks to renew an expiring DUA, please submit a request up to 6-months prior to the expiration date specified in the current DUA. The HD must complete step #4 below to renew an existing DUA, regardless of whether the current data file specifications are to be maintained or new data types added to the current data file specifications template.

Note: if adding new data types, the HD will have to additionally complete step #8 below.

- 3) If your HD decides to initiate or renew a DUA with NHSN, the HD will need to complete and submit two documents to [NHSNDUA@cdc.gov](mailto:NHSNDUA@cdc.gov): (1) "DUA Signature Template" including the data protections section, and (2) "Data File Specifications Template" requesting specific data from the Patient Safety Component, Healthcare Personnel Safety Component, and Dialysis Component
  - a. At this time, the following data is not available to obtain via a DUA with CDC: NHSN Long Term Care Component Data, NHSN Dialysis Component performance process measures, NHSN Biovigilance Component Data, NHSN home dialysis center data, and data from federal healthcare facilities (i.e. Indian Health Service facilities, Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs facilities).
  - b. It is the HD's responsibility to safeguard the covered data specified in the DUA. CDC encourages HD staff to review the data sought via a DUA with HD legal counsel to assure that current statutes, policies, and practices enable the HD to safeguard the NHSN data that will be made accessible via a DUA. from data breaches
- 4) DHQP will schedule a conference call to discuss the DUA in greater detail and the HD's policies and provisions for protecting the data shared. The following HD staff may be important to include in preparations for the call or the call itself: HAI Coordinator, State Epidemiologist or epidemiologists working on HAIs, antimicrobial use and resistance staff, legal counsel, and surveillance coordinator. The process for completing and signing a DUA with NHSN from date of initial inquiry to initial data accessibility takes up to six months.
- 5) DHQP encourages the health department to engage the appropriate hospital associations or other state and local facility-type associations (ASC, Dialysis, etc.) who have members whose data will be included in

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the DUA. Partnerships with these associations are key to disseminating information about the DUA and engaging facilities in the process. DHQP recommends clear and open communication among all partners, which will contribute to a data sharing arrangement that is beneficial to all involved.

To that end, DHQP will work with the HD to schedule a follow-up conversation that includes appropriate representatives of the HD and state or local healthcare facility association(s) to describe the DUA's purposes, processes, and provisions and answer any questions or concerns from the association regarding the DUA.

- 6) Once CDC and the health department have come to agreement on the terms of the DUA, the agreement is signed by the health department and DHQP. The HD's access to the covered data will begin on the first day of the fourth month after the DUA is signed.
- 7) DHQP will work with the health department and the appropriate facility associations to host a webinar to inform all local and state associations about the DUA and the 90-day opportunity to opt-out of reporting. Only data that is included in a facility's monthly reporting plan will be included in datasets shared with the health department.