

February 28, 2008

Dear Maine Physicians (Select Blue Ribbons Pediatric Practices):

On behalf of the Maine Health Management Coalition's (MHMC) members, we would like to thank you for participating in the 2007 Pathways to Excellence (PTE) initiative and we congratulate you on the blue ribbons you have already achieved in one or more of the following categories:

- Office Systems Survey
- Asthma
- Immunizations

We would like to inform you of some important changes that will be taking place this year and beyond related to PTE reporting. The MHMC recently made the decision to transition from our own data collection to utilizing Bridges to Excellence (BTE) and/or the National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA) for areas of practice for which good recognition programs exist. Beginning 2009, PTE will solely use national recognition entities such as BTE or NCQA for assigning blue ribbons for Office Systems and for the adult practice Process/Outcomes Clinical Metrics. As no national recognition program currently exists for pediatric immunization and asthma clinical metrics, PTE will continue to administer the asthma and immunization surveys until such time a national program is announced. Please see the attached FAQ for more information about these changes.

Because of the conversion to national metrics, the blue ribbons you achieved for 2007 will automatically be carried over to 2008. In addition, you will be granted a "Level I" recognition status for BTE's Physician Office Link for 2008 if you received a blue ribbon in PTE's office systems survey in 2007. This reprieve from reporting for 2008 was a strategic decision made by the MHMC to allow you sufficient time to plan for reporting to BTE or NCQA in 2009. Once again, receiving recognition from a national entity such as BTE or NCQA will be the only way to achieve a ribbon for PTE office systems survey in 2009. As national programs for recognition in pediatric process/outcomes metrics become available, we will update you on plans to move to them well ahead of time.

The blue ribbons you achieved during 2007 will stay up on the MHMC website (www.mhmc.info) until April 1, 2009, so you do not need to submit any information for those areas this year unless you would like to update your ratings.

To pursue blue ribbon status in those PTE categories for which you still need blue ribbons, simply refer to the enclosed documents and follow the instructions for submitting data for 2008. For your convenience, we have color coded the information as follows:

- White: Office Systems Survey Frequently Asked Questions
- Yellow: Process/Outcomes Survey Frequently Asked Questions
- Green: Asthma Goals & Targets and Specifications

- Blue: Immunization Results Goals & Targets and Specifications

Please note that the **deadline** for all survey submissions is **April 30th, 2008**.

To get to the survey – beginning **Monday, March 3rd**:

1) In your web browser's address box, enter: <http://survey.mhic.org>. You should see a 'MHIC Survey System Entry' login screen. Please enter your login and password:

Login: «LOGON»

Password: «PASSWORD»

2) Next, you should see a menu screen listing: 'Pathways to Excellence 2008' – click on this.

3) You should see the 2008 survey. Please read several instructions on the first page, and you are ready to start the survey.

Again, you need not submit anything additional for 2008 in those areas for which you achieved ribbons for 2007. However, if you choose to resubmit in an attempt to increase your survey score, you are welcome to do so by contacting Mindy Perkins, Survey Administrator at mperkins@mhic.org and she will provide you with an access code and instructions for submitting your data. As in the past, PTE information will be publicly reported on the Internet (www.mhmc.info) and, in some cases, integrated into health plan financial incentive programs and/or employer benefit programs.

Once again, thank you for participating in PTE, a program designed to improve health care in Maine. Thanks to the past participation of over 300 Maine practices, the people in Maine now have even more information that they can use to assess the delivery of care and to make important health care choices. We also appreciate your cooperation as the MHMC's PTE program transitions to using national metrics to assign blue ribbons. This will result in some changes but we are confident that it will reduce duplicative reporting efforts and ultimately improve the standardization and efficiency of clinical performance measurement and public reporting efforts across the state.

Please don't hesitate to contact us or your local physician hospital organization with any questions or concerns that you might have regarding this process.

Once again, thank you!

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