



AIRA
AMERICAN IMMUNIZATION
REGISTRY ASSOCIATION

INFORMATION REQUEST

Topic: Patients without an Address

Request Date: June 12, 2018

Information Requested:

In Philadelphia, we are running into onboarding providers and sites that have transient or homeless populations: i.e. prisons, shelters, etc.

The PID field for address requires an Address Type (typically ^M or ^L for mailing/legal). When an address is provided, there is the option to put ^C for 'current or temporary.'

Is there any guidance on what sites should be entering for this field when the patient has no address to give? Should they leave it blank? Some homeless shelters have been putting their address as the patient's temporary address, but it would be ill advised to do this in the case of a prison. Also, due to the sensitivity of the situation, it doesn't seem like a good idea to list the homeless shelter as the address either. Is an NPI or some other identifier required?

Requesting Member: Jenna Jaxheimer (Philadelphia)

Responding Member(s): Kim Salisbury-Keith (RI), Bridget Ahrens (VT)

Results:

RI:

Rhode Island has also been discussing this issue – not only for patient addresses, but also the facility administering vaccines. In some instances, our adult correctional facility is administering vaccines to inmates, also inpatient mental health facilities and drug treatment facilities are administering vaccines to patients. No final decisions, but are considering taking in the actual information but “protecting” the name of the facility administering, as well as the address of the recipient if it is an inpatient setting and the patient is using the facility as their address. Perhaps – just indicating it is unavailable in displays



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VT:

In Vermont, we deal with this in multiple ways – but do not have a current/temporary flag. Most senders are sending HL7 messages, and addresses are updated in our system for each new address included in the message.

Dept of Corrections reports all immunizations administered – and in many cases uses the correctional facility as the individual’s address.

We have some community health centers with clients who are homeless. We have advised them to use the “best address available,” but sometimes they simply enter unknown in the address field, with the town, state, and zip of where they are staying.

We have a community outreach group that works with temporary workers on farms, providing immunizations and other health care. They were concerned about putting those families at risk by providing an address – so we advise this group to use “unknown” for the street address as well.

I might add that our state law includes phrasing to protect the confidentiality of data in our system that I believe would protect our records from subpoena. There are other steps you can take as well. I believe there is (or there at least was) something called a certificate of confidentiality.