**Frequently Asked Questions about Message Mapping Guide Implementation**

**July 25, 2017**

1. **Question**: Which data elements are needed by CDC to define a unique case?

**Answer**: The Generic Data Elements that CDC uses to define a unique case of a nationally notifiable condition in the Message Validation, Processing, and Provisioning System are described in the following document on CDC’s Draft Message Mapping Guide for HL7 Case Notification Web Site: <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/document/Generic_Data_Elements_that_Define_a_Unique_Case_Release_2_20170707.docx>. This document summarizes two Generic v2 Message Mapping Guide (MMG) data elements that are used together to define a unique case: a) National Reporting Jurisdiction (77968-6) and b) local record id (INV168 in OBR-3). The values of these two data elements must remain the same when sending updates on a unique case. Any changes to these data elements will cause the addition of a new case to the CDC data base. The “HL7 Implementation Notes” in the Generic version 2 MMG also includes the notes about the use of these two variables in defining a unique case at CDC.

1. **Question**: Which conditions can be sent by using only the Generic v2 MMG?

**Answer:** The conditions that currently use only the Generic v2 MMG are listed in the following document on CDC’s Draft Message Mapping Guide for HL7 Case Notification Web Site: <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/case-notification/related-documentation.html>. In the future we expect to develop disease-specific MMGs that will indicate the additional condition-specific data elements needed for national surveillance of these conditions.

1. **Question:** Which preferred and optional data elements in the MMG should be sent in the HL7 case notification message?

**Answer:** Regardless of whether a data element is considered preferred or optional, the jurisdiction should map to and send to CDC all the data elements requested in the MMG that they collect in their surveillance information system.

1. **Question**: Is CDC using snapshot processing of HL7 case notification messages?

**Answer**: Yes. HL7 case notification messages are stored as separate messages and more recent messages do not overwrite nor update previous messages. The most recent case notification messages will be used by the CDC programs.

1. **Question:** How do I indicate that a previously transmitted case is no longer a case?

**Answer:** If you determine that a previously sent case should not be counted as a case, send an updated case notification using one of the following methods:

**Preferred Method**: Re-send the case with case classification status data element ‘77990-0’ =“Not a Case” and Notification Result Status (OBR-25) = “C” to indicate this is a correction.

**Alternate Method**: Re-send the case with case classification status data element ‘77990-0’ = “Not a Case” and Notification Result Status (OBR-25) = “X” to indicate this case is “rescinded”.

**Alternate Method for jurisdictions unable to send case classification status of “Not a Case”**: Regardless of the value transmitted in the case classification status, re-send the case with Notification Result Status (in OBR-25) = “X” to indicate this case is rescinded.

The updated record will supersede the previously sent case notification. CDC Programs will be informed that notifications with a case classification status of “Not a Case” or Notification Result Status of “X’ should not be included in case counts.

When sending updates, please be careful not to change the data elements that CDC uses to define a unique case (see <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/document/Generic_Data_Elements_that_Define_a_Unique_Case_Release_2_20170707.docx>).   **Note**: **If you change the values of any data elements that CDC uses to define a unique case during the correction process, you will cause a new case to be added to the CDC data base instead of updating a previously reported case.**

1. **Question:**  How do I update information on a previously submitted case?

**Answer:**  To update the information on a previously submitted case, update the information in your surveillance system and then re-send the case.  The Notification Result Status (in OBR-25) should be set to “C” to indicate a correction.  If the case classification changes as a result of the new information, please remember to update the case classification status (e.g., confirmed, probable, suspected, not a case.) The updated record will supersede the previous HL7 case notification sent to CDC.  When sending updates, please be careful not to change the data elements that CDC uses to define a unique case (see <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/document/Generic_Data_Elements_that_Define_a_Unique_Case_Release_2_20170707.docx>).   **Note**: **If you change the values of any data elements that CDC uses to define a unique case during the correction process, you will cause a new case to be added to the CDC data base instead of updating a previously reported case.**

1. **Question**: For CWE and CE data types, does the standard code need to be placed in the first triplet and does the local (alternative) code have to be placed in the second triplet?

**Answer**: No. The standard and local codes can be sent in either the first or second triplet. When CDC processes the data, the triplets will be scanned to identify the standard code and will validate the value against the standard.

1. **Question:** The Message Mapping Guide includes a coded data element that my reporting jurisdiction captures as a text field instead of a coded data element. What should I do?

**Answer**: If the jurisdiction captures data as a text field instead of coded data for a CWE data element, send the text in the ninth component of the CWE data element.

1. **Question**: The order of the information in the Test Scenarios does not match the order of the information in my surveillance information system. What should I do?

**Answer**: Please enter the information into the correct fields in your surveillance information system. You can reorder the data elements in the Test Scenario to match the order of the data elements in your surveillance information system, to help facilitate the data entry process.

1. **Question**: How can we tell what has changed in a pilot test-ready MMG since the last time the pilot test-ready MMG was posted on the Draft Message Mapping Guide for HL7 Case Notifications Web site (<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/message-mapping-guides.html>)?

**Answer:** Each pilot test-ready MMG has a “Revisions” worksheet that includes a list of revisions made to the MMG.

1. **Question**: I heard that some LOINC codes (representing data element identifiers sent in the HL7 case notification message) in the Generic v2 MMG have changed. How will I know which LOINC codes changed and should I use the updated LOINC codes?

**Answer**: Everyone developing messages should use the new values. The test-ready Generic v2 MMG has been updated to include the new LOINC codes and the Final Generic v2 MMG will use these codes. The Technical Assistance team will assist pilot jurisdictions with the needed updates. A mapping from the old codes to the new codes will be available on the Draft Message Mapping Guide for HL7 Case Notifications Web site (<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/message-mapping-guides.html>.)

1. **Question**: Can Object Identifiers (OIDS) be sent in CE and CWE data elements rather than identifiers from HL7 table 0386?

**Answer**: Either OIDs or data from HL7 table 0396 can be used. In the latest version of the PHIN Message Structure Specification, the CE.3 and CWE.3 “Name of Coding System” and CE.6 and CWE.6 “Name of Alternate Coding System” components maximum length was increased to 199 to allow the use of OIDs instead of Table 0396 code system code, if desired by the implementer.

1. **Question:** If we do not have information for a specific data element for a case, do we need to send the data element in the message?

**Answer:**  If you do not have information for a data element, there is no need to include the data element in the messages, except for these situations:

* If the “HL7 usage” column in the MMG indicates that the element is required (R), or required but may be empty (RE), the data element must be included in the message.
* For some disease-specific elements, the CDC program has requested that information be sent when the value is ‘unknown’ (see *Methods for Conveying Unknown Values in Case Notification* at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/case-notification/related-documentation.html>).

1. **Question**: If a reporting jurisdiction does not have the resources to send both laboratory interpretive data (in the Epi OBR segment) and laboratory associated data (in the Lab OBR segment), which is higher priority?

**Answer:** The laboratory interpretive data in the Epi OBR is the priority for the HL7 case notifications. If a reporting jurisdiction can send both types of data that would be helpful. However, the reporting jurisdiction should not send optional lab findings in the Lab OBR instead of interpretive laboratory data in Epi OBR.