



Precision Recovered.

Regional Health System Improves Data Quality for Chest Pain

The Challenge

A regional health system experienced an anomaly in their Chest Pain abstraction data. Reports indicated an unexpected shift in key metrics, raising concerns about the accuracy of the submitted information. The site Director and Abstraction Manager at Trios Health initially identified the inconsistency during a routine abstraction update meeting in December 2024. While the data appeared incorrect, the underlying cause remained elusive.



The Investigation

A collaborative investigation between Trios Health and Carta Healthcare's expert abstraction team was immediately initiated. By meticulously reviewing patient records and comparing them against documented processes, the root cause was identified: a change in Trios Health's laboratory processes implemented in July 2024. This change, while essential for the lab's internal operations, resulted in lab results being timestamped in Central Daylight Time (CDT), a different time zone than the Pacific Daylight Time (PDT) used for the lab draw timestamps – the time zone previously consistently used across all data points. This time zone difference, unbeknownst to the abstraction team at the time of implementation, led to significant discrepancies in the calculated time intervals between lab draws and results within the patient records. For instance, a lab result verified at 22:30 CDT should have been coded as 20:30 PDT in the ACD Portal, a crucial detail impacting the accuracy of Chest Pain timelines.

The Impact

The unrecognized shift in time zones directly impacted the accuracy of the abstracted Chest Pain data. The calculated time between lab draw and lab result was significantly inflated for cases processed after the July 2024 laboratory process change. This misrepresentation could have potentially skewed quality metrics and affected the overall understanding of patient care timelines for Chest Pain events at Trios Health.



The Resolution and Next Steps

Upon identifying the root cause, Carta Healthcare took immediate and comprehensive action:

Retrospective Data Correction: Every Chest Pain case abstracted by Carta Healthcare since the laboratory process change in July 2024 was meticulously reviewed and updated to reflect the correct data, accounting for the time zone difference.

Enhanced Abstractor Education: Comprehensive education was provided to the entire Carta Healthcare abstraction team. This training specifically addressed the Trios Health time zone discrepancy and reinforced best practices for identifying and correctly coding data involving varying time zones across different data sources within patient records.

The Outcome

Through swift collaboration and decisive action, Trios Health and Carta Healthcare successfully resolved the data discrepancy. The corrected data now provides an accurate representation of Chest Pain care timelines. Furthermore, the enhanced abstractor education ensures the team is equipped to identify and accurately code data involving differing time zones in the future, preventing similar issues. This case study highlights the importance of clear communication, thorough investigation, and the adaptability of Carta Healthcare's expert team in maintaining data integrity, even in the face of evolving clinical and operational processes within partner healthcare systems.