

Nebraska Hospital and Independent Lab Census

As part of their plan updates due to the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) in the late spring of 2012, all State Health Information Exchange were required to conduct a census of the hospital and independent laboratories within their respective states. The primary objective of the census was to determine the number of labs sending electronic lab results to ambulatory provider outside of their organization in a structured format in calendar year 2011. In addition, the ONC required that each lab be asked if they were following the Logical Observation Identifiers Names and Codes (LOINC) standards.

The ONC released the PIN (program information notice) with this requirement on February 8, 2012. While the ONC did not mandate a particular instrument or methodology, NORC did provide two brief instruments for the hospital and independent lab census nearly a month later on March 3, 2012. NORC recommended a standard mail survey using a modified Dillman approach to maximize response rate. They estimated a window of 30-60 days to complete such a process. At the time the recommendation was made, the due date for the report was 67 days out, which made it impractical to use the prescribed methodology. The UNMC research team chose to conduct a telephone census. Using a single trained caller and a script that incorporated the NORC surveys, it was expected that the majority of labs in the state could be contacted within 5 business days.

The following summarizes the results of our census:

116 Hospital labs were identified using the CMS OSCAR system

4 Hospitals reported that they did not have a lab

3 Labs had disconnected phones

16 Of the identified labs were duplicates (had same phone number) or reported to be serviced by another lab in the listing

93 Unique, operating, hospital laboratories were contacted

9 Labs (9.7%) were considered non-responders

84 Labs (90.3%) completed the survey

Of the 84 completed responses:

Labs sending results to ambulatory providers outside of their organization electronically in a structured format in calendar year 2011:

Yes - 17 (20.23%)

No - 66 (78.57%)

Did not know - 2 (2.38%)

Of those submitting structured electronic results (n = 17), the proportion of results being sent to EHRs and web portals were:

	EHR	Web Portal
0%	1 (5.88%)	3 (17.65%)
1-24%	2 (11.76%)	2 (11.76%)
25-49%	2 (11.76%)	1 (5.88%)
50-74%	5 (29.41%)	3 (17.65%)
75-99%	5 (29.41%)	3 (17.65%)
100%	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Do not know	2 (11.76%)	5 (29.41%)

Labs following LOINC standards for test results send to ambulatory providers outside of their organization in calendar year 2011

Yes - 13 (15.48%)

No - 63 (75%)

Did not know - 8 (9.52%)

Of those submitting structure electronic results, 5 out of 17 (29.41%) followed the LOINC standards on at least some of the results sent durning 2011.

Three of the four labs (75%) with more than 500,000 billable tests were sending results in a structured electronic format compared to 7 out 21 labs (33.3%) billing for between 100,000 and 499,999 labs, and 7 out of 54 labs (12.96%) billing for fewer than 100,000 labs.

None of the lab managers, directors, and supervisors surveyed could confirm that their lab had implemented the LRI guide. (8 did not know and 76 responded no)

Similarly, no respondent could indicate which of the HL7 standards they were using.

42 Independent labs were identified using the CMS OSCAR system

3 Reported that they were not a lab

1 Reported that they did not send out lab results (research lab)

1 Lab was closed

37 Independent laboratories were contacted

2 Labs (5.41%) Refused to participate

2 Labs (5.41%) did not respond to repeated contacts

33 Labs (89.19%) completed the survey

Two corporations accounted for 18 unique lab sites. Results are presented for all 33 labs.

Of the 33 completed responses:

Labs sending results to ambulatory providers outside of their organization electronically in a structure format in calendar year 2011:

Yes - 25 (75.76%)

No - 8 (24.24%)

Did not know - 0 (0%)

Of those submitting structured electronic results (n = 25), the proportion of results being sent to EHRs and web portals were:

	EHR	Web Portal
0%	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
1-24%	1 (4%)	2 (8%)
25-49%	1 (4%)	1 (4%)
50-74%	9 (36%)	9 (36%)
75-99%	12 (48%)	11 (44%)
100%	2 (8%)	2 (8%)
Do not know	0 (0%)	1 (4%)

Labs following LOINC standards for test results send to ambulatory providers outside of their organization in calendar year 2011

Yes - 1 (3.03%)

No - 15 (45.45%)

Did not know - 17 (51.52%)

Of those submitting structure electronic results, 12 out of 25 (48%) reported that they did not know if they followed the LOINC standards on at least some of the results sent during 2011. Of the remaining 13 labs, 12 (48%) indicated that they did not follow the LOINC standards on any results.

One of the lab managers, directors, and supervisors surveyed could confirm that their lab had implemented the LRI guide. (13 did not know and 19 responded no)

Twelve labs, eleven from the same corporation, could indicate which of the HL7 standards they were using (HL7 2.3.1).