

APPENDIX J

Massachusetts Health Data Consortium¹

Mission

"The Massachusetts Health Data Consortium will lead the development of a comprehensive health data system to address the health information needs of the Commonwealth for the purpose of improving health care and health."

The **Massachusetts Health Data Consortium** was founded in 1978 by the state's major public and private health care organizations. They recognized the need for a neutral agency, an "honest broker," independent of special interests, to collect, analyze and disseminate health care information. The Consortium's information products, services and special projects support health policy development, technology planning and implementation, and improved decision making in the allocation and financing of health care.

REPUTATION - The Consortium has become known nationally for providing accurate, reliable information on critical health issues. The participation of the Consortium's member organizations, clients and other experts in the review of methods, analyses and findings assures the quality and acceptance of the Consortium's data.

DECISION SUPPORT - Data products and technical consultation are provided to a broad client base through board-sponsored and customized research services, collaborative projects and educational conferences. The Consortium works with hospitals, government planners, employers, purchasers, labor, HMOs, insurers and academic researchers to produce reports relating to:

- the health status of the population
- marketing and planning of health services
- the socioeconomic characteristics of the population
- community needs, health facilities, services and manpower
- private and public sector health insurance plans

¹ <http://www.mahealthdata.org/consortium/mission/index.html>

CATALYST - A respected independent agency with a diverse constituency, the Consortium is a powerful catalyst for cooperative dynamic discussion and action. The Consortium is committed to providing information that will improve our health care system - not only today, but also in the future.

STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION - In 1995, the Consortium organized the Affiliated Health Information Networks of New England Project to improve the state's health care infrastructure among payer and provider organizations. The Project is structured through its Information Exchange Events and virtual collaboration. Goals are 1) to facilitate the development of a region-wide comprehensive health data system in which everyone who pays for, delivers or uses health services can make decisions based on readily accessible information and 2) to facilitate compliance with HIPAA legislation.

These ideals will be achieved through the creation of a health information infrastructure that is standards-based, protective of personal privacy and supported by trading partners. Improving health information access via the infrastructure will raise the health status of the general population by enhancing the quality of health services and the efficiency of the delivery system.