

Why Outsourcing E/MPI Cleanup and Maintenance Helps You

Is your hospital converting to a new health information system or merging systems with other facilities? Like other provider organizations, perhaps you are planning or implementing an Electronic Health Record (EHR) or a new Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS). Is your institution on the cutting edge, contemplating or participating in a Health Information Exchange (HIE) or Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO)? Ensuring the effectiveness of these IT initiatives requires an organization to maximize the data integrity of its enterprise master patient index (EMPI) by identifying the duplicate records, correcting them and addressing their causes.

But who has the time?

In today's dynamic health care environment, HIM managers don't have adequate time to devote to the myriad of issues demanding their attention. HIM department resources are focused on completing the normal departmental functions vital to the daily operation of the health care facility (i.e. analysis, coding and abstracting and information retrieval/release). Adding a large MPI cleanup project can tax your management resources and overload existing employees. All too often, when hospital employees are assigned to the duplicate reconciliation task, they are pulled away from the cleanup to address more immediate needs. Mistakes occur and reconciliation efforts are prolonged. The timeline for data reconciliation is limited, driven by the need to get EHR or other systems online.

Just Associates: Your E/MPI Cleanup and Maintenance Solution

Outsourcing patient identity management makes sense for hospitals and other health care facilities. You can avoid overburdening your own employees, who, after all, may not have the expertise to undertake large-scale MPI clean up projects. You avoid the time and learning curve that it takes to get your staff up to speed on appropriate processes and procedures. For example, the tricky "validity" review—the critical

The Little Red Hen in the Today's HIT Landscape

You are already working with limited staff and additional resources are hard to come by. Finding, cleaning and fixing up to 20 years worth of duplicate patient medical records is a gargantuan task for staff with other skill sets. When it comes time to clean your organization's MPI, don't be surprised if you find yourself running around like the Little Red Hen in the enduring folktale, asking "Who will:"

- Analyze the MPI records to identify the possible duplicates?
- Validate that each possible duplicate is a real duplicate?
- Pull the records needed for validating the duplicates?
- Merge the confirmed duplicates in all of the required databases?
- Combine the paper charts and fix the microfiche, radiology jackets or PACs images?
- Trend the confirmed duplicate results to demonstrate the cause and source of the duplicates?
- Manage this project, train the necessary staff, QA the staff's work, and provide regular status reports?
- Identify process changes that will help reduce the creation of new duplicates?
- Provide ongoing maintenance of your EMPI, ensuring newly created duplicates are resolved?

Unlike the Little Red Hen, you don't have to do it all yourself. Outsourcing this function to experienced and reputable **Just Associates** is a high-quality and cost-effective alternative to doing it all by yourself.



decision process to determine if two potential duplicate records really belong to the same patient—is only an easy problem to resolve when the data elements exactly match. Unfortunately, most duplicate records in your system contain data elements that are slightly different. An employee whose time is temporarily diverted to cleaning up the MPI might not have the experience or insight to resolve such data discrepancy issues. Outsourcing your EMPI cleanup increases the chances of your data reconciliation project being completed correctly and on time.

You can further increase your odds of getting the job done right and on time by selecting **Just Associates**. We are patient data integrity experts; it is what we do and all we do. Our staff brings strong project management discipline to all of our MPI cleanup projects, along with a history of completing projects within defined timelines and budgets. Our managers dig deep to uncover the causes of your duplicate record issues. We possess in-depth knowledge of E/MPI system configurations and settings and MPI database models. We understand interfaces between systems as well as how information flow can affect other departments' systems. We use this knowledge to help uncover the root causes of data discrepancies and improve the quality of your E/MPI.

Our EMPI Maintenance Services help you maintain the integrity of your EMPI. It is not enough that you identify and resolve your patient data integrity issues and cleanup the duplicate records. A diligent approach is needed to maintain the integrity of your EMPI's data over time. Whether it is for immediate short term support or long term ongoing maintenance, making use of **Just Associates'** trained, experienced staff can allow you to meet your ongoing EMPI integrity goals while minimizing the burden on your department.

With **Just Associates**, you get:

Fully Trained, Experienced Staff -- Our staff of Patient Identity Experts all receive extensive, on-going training on the critical “validity” decision making process. This extensive training gives us better control of the quality of their output. Additionally, our staff can remotely access your hospital systems minimizing the disruption to your department. Maintaining a fully trained, experienced staff also allow us to quickly ramp up to staff even the largest projects in a short amount of time.

Best Practices--JA brings a wealth of HIM and MPI knowledge to the table. Included in this arsenal is best practice expertise for correcting duplicate MRNs garnered from years of experience completing MPI data reconciliation projects across the nation, in every major hospital information system and many clinical and ancillary information systems.

Knowledge Transfer--JA project managers have a wealth of knowledge concerning patient identity data integrity and MPI duplicate cleanup processes and procedures. Our managers glean information about the facility's data during the cleanup project and freely share this knowledge with our clients. In addition, all processes and procedures are documented for the client's use after completion of the reconciliation project. This assures that you will benefit from our services long after the project is completed.



Quality Assurance--JA's staff is well trained and experienced. We employ strict QA processes and employ dedicated QA Specialists to ensure that you receive the same high quality results for which we are known.

Just Associates brings value to the equation, tailoring solutions to meet your needs. We can work with you so that your organization benefits from the high-quality and cost-effective alternative we bring to patient identity management. We'll not only make sure the data running through your new systems is clean; we'll show you how to keep it clean.

Just Associates' Services--

Just Associates' portfolio of services, including Master Patient Index (MPI) Integrity Assessments, Reconciliations, Data Analyses, Software Solutions and Patient Identity Consulting rids our customers' systems of duplicate records by implementing process and technology to identify and merge existing duplicates and prevent creation of new ones. Our unique combination of service and technology helps customers achieve and maintain a duplicate-free Master Patient Index. Elimination of duplication in the Master Patient Index helps safeguard the patient, clinicians, and hospital by ensuring that clinicians have access to each patient's complete, consistent and accurate medical history. Through our EMPI consulting services we apply our unique perspective on patient data quality and the electronic linking of patient data to help you identify the best solution for your specific needs.

Contact Just Associates

If you would like more information on assessing the integrity of your patient data, or would like general information on Just Associates' unique service offerings, contact us at:

Phone: 303-693-4727

Fax: 303-693-8437

e-mail: info@justassociates.com

Or, visit us at www.justassociates.com.