

Community Benefits Reporting

Frequently Asked Questions

May we submit a copy of our Community Health Needs Assessment to the Attorney General's Office ("AGO")?

Yes. Hospitals and Health Maintenance Organizations now have the option, and are encouraged, to submit a copy of their Community Health Needs Assessment to the AGO as part of their Community Benefits Reports.

Can revisions be made to a Community Benefits Report after it has been filed?

Yes. Revisions can be made by contacting the AGO. If errors are identified after a Community Benefits Report is submitted, please contact the Community Benefits Coordinator at the Attorney General's Office at CBAdmin@state.ma.us as soon as possible.

How do we report problems or system errors that may occur when we try to file our report on the AGO's website?

If you encounter problems filing your report, please contact the Community Benefits Coordinator at the Attorney General's Office at CBAdmin@state.ma.us.

Does the Attorney General's Office provide extensions for reporting?

In order to ensure review and publication on the AGO website on schedule, Hospital Community Benefits Reports must be filed by April 1, and HMO Community Benefits Reports must be filed by June 1.

May an organization report bad debt as a community benefit?

No. Bad debt is not reportable as a community benefit under the Community Benefits Guidelines for Non Profit Hospitals. Please refer to Appendix II of the Community Benefits Guidelines for Non Profit Hospitals for recommended medical debt collection practices.

Can we include a benefit program for a community need that was not identified by our Community Health Needs Assessment?

Yes, under certain conditions. If a program develops from an organization's current or amended Community Benefits Plan, and otherwise meets the standards of the Community Benefits Guidelines, it can be reported as a community benefit.

How should an organization report a program that lasts more than one year?

The program may be reported in a year-to-year manner and/or at the conclusion of the program. In the case of a multi-year program, an organization should also report the current year of the program (e.g. year one of three).

Can we report marketing efforts to promote a Community Benefits Program?

Only report marketing efforts (e.g. billboards, brochures, and radio segments) if they address the needs of the Target Populations identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment and/or Community Benefits Plan. If marketing efforts seek to advertise new or existing facilities/services, increase referrals to the organization, or promote treatment plans for existing patients, they cannot be reported as Community Benefits Programs.