



Statewide Planning and Research Cooperative System (SPARCS) Questions and Answers from SPARCS Submitter Forums

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Questions from the most recent SPARCS Submitter Forum:

Date	Question	Answer
7/30/2026	Where can we get the updated race codes?	The updated race codes can be found on the CDC website at: https://www.cdc.gov/phinf/resources/vocabulary/documents/PH_RaceAndEthnicity_CDC_v1.3.xlsx
7/30/2026	Can we enter county code 88 for New Jersey patients?	County Code is not required if the patient does not live in NY, so it should be left blank.
7/30/2026	Does adding modifiers to a claim make it a frequency code 7?	No, just because you're adjusting the record does not make it an adjusted claim. If you are adding or changing a modifier you need to submit it as an adjustment and actively change the frequency code to 7.
7/30/2026	Are the race codes updated for existing patients, or do we have to manually enter the codes to resubmit?	You do not need to update or resubmit any records for the race code.
7/30/2026	For other state patients do we keep county code, ethnic code, and race code blank?	Only the county code should be left blank for out of state residents.
7/30/2026	What if the patient refuses to give ethnicity and race information?	R9 and E9 can be used in these circumstances.
7/30/2026	Do the AS revenue codes listed in this submitter forum slide reflect the complete list?	Yes, this is the total list for SPARCS.
7/30/2026	Does updating 0361 for Ambulatory Surgery change what gets reported for our extension clinics?	Yes, if they perform amsurge. We are not reclassifying previous claims, so this will be on a go-forward basis.



7/30/2026	For 0361 revenue codes, if an existing record is updated via a 7-frequency code, will it be reclassified or grandfathered under the original classification?	It would be reclassified, as the adjustment would update the claim.
7/30/2026	Can we get a date range of affected accounts for PII research? We need to determine if this is from a legacy system.	If you are confident in your current business processes, we recommend holding off on research while we refine our reporting to better help you research recent data.
7/30/2026	When the PII reports come out, will subsequent reports include cases found in previous reports, or will they contain only new offenses?	The report will only show new records to investigate.
7/30/2026	My facility received a PII notification, and our Privacy Operations team is requesting that SPARCS sign an attestation of deletion of PHI. Who do I submit that request to for completion?	Our team will reach out to you.
7/30/2026	If we have these fields as free text to meet the needs of our organization, can we block these fields from going to SPARCS?	You will need to reference the Companion Guide and implementation guides. Your internal technical team should also be leveraged to assist. We realize there are business processes where PII may need to be submitted, and redaction workflows will handle that. Our reporting is intended to assist facilities in identifying information that may have been submitted incorrectly.

General questions about SPARCS:

Question	Answer
How is SPACRS data used?	The data is intended for public health research and initiatives. Many private industry researchers also request SPARCS data for their projects. SPARCS data also contributes to other aspects of health care such as rate setting and licensing.
For someone who is brand new to SPARCS reporting and has very little experience, what is the best way to learn from scratch how to properly report this information?	We recommend: - Review information published on the SPARCS Data Submission page: https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/submission/. It is especially important to have someone from your technical team review the SPARCS Transaction Information Companion Guide X12 Version 5010 posted in the Resources section. - Submit a request via the SPARCS Submissions Portal for a submissions training facilitated by Optum (https://sparcs.optumoi.com/home). - Identify and collaborate with other submitters using the same billing systems and best practices.
What are the steps for getting a new user set up to submit data?	Requests for provisioning new users should be submitted via the SPARCS Intake and Compliance Zendesk site: https://sparcscompliance.zendesk.com/ .
What can we do to ensure we stay provisioned, if we submit monthly, but users are deprovisioned after 30 days?	The best practice is to log into the SPARCS Submissions portal (https://sparcs.optumoi.com/home) every 4 weeks (28 days) to ensure provisioning is always active. Calendar reminders are helpful for making sure this step isn't missed.
If we do submissions through the Optum portal weekly, do we still need to log into the "hub" every 30 days, so our account doesn't expire?	Yes, the Customer Care Hub (https://customercare.optum.com/public/home.html) is separate from the portal, so you will need to log in every 30 days for your account to remain active. Best practice is to log into both the hub and the portal on the same day every 4 weeks (28 days).
Where can we find this submitter forum presentation?	SPARCS Submitter Forum slides are sent to attendees after the meeting. Slides and summaries are posted on https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/submission/ .
How do we find out when SPARCS submitter forums are to be hosted?	Submitter forum dates are set based on the availability of presenters and facilitators. Anyone who is set up as a SPARCS contact will receive an email with the invitation to the next forum once it has been scheduled, usually about 2 weeks in advance. If you would like to be added as a contact for your facility, ask your SPARCS coordinator to submit a provisioning ticket at https://sparcscompliance.zendesk.com/ .
What do I do if I'm not seeing any emails from the	Please send an email to sparcs.submissions@health.ny.gov from the address where you wish to receive emails from us so we can troubleshoot with you and pass along the key details.



SPARCS team regarding the biannual security audit?	
Is there a way to send and receive messages containing sensitive information?	Any communications with the SPARCS team that include sensitive information must be sent using the Secure File Transfer 2.0 application in the Health Commerce System (https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/public/hcs_login.html). Never include any patient personally identifiable information (PII) in a standard email.
What is the HCS?	The Health Commerce System (HCS) is a secure platform that hosts many different New York State Department of Health applications. SPARCS utilizes the Secure File Transfer application hosted within HCS to securely transmit data to facilities. All SPARCS coordinators and back up coordinators should have HCS accounts. A guide for setting up a Health Commerce System account can be found here: https://apps.health.ny.gov/pub/ctrldocs/paperless_edoc2.pdf. If you are setting up a new account and do not know who your facility's HCS Coordinator is, please call the Commerce Accounts Management Unit (CAMU) at 1-866-529-1890, option 1.
Do you know what role is required for the Secure File Transfer application in HCS?	Any user with HCS access can use the Secure File Transfer 2.0 application. If using it for the first time, you will be prompted to complete a few set-up steps.

Questions about SPARCS Compliance:

Question	Answer
How often are SPARCS Submissions required?	Submissions are required on at least a monthly basis.
Where can we find if the data we submitted has met compliance or to see the status of our submissions?	Audit and Compliance reports can be found at https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/reports/dashboards/heatmap/ . If the numbers do not align with your expectations, please review the portal rejection reports to identify any submission failures.
How should a facility address a projected compliance shortfall resulting from service volume redistribution to a new facility? What are compliance targets for new facilities?	Compliance targets for new facilities are set to 1 record. If you are seeing through the reconciliation reports that you are below target and suspect it is due to the new facility, you can submit an exception request for SPARCS team review. Visit the SPARCS Intake and Compliance Zendesk site at https://sparcscompliance.zendesk.com/ .
When you submit an exception or extension through the Zendesk site, do you get an email with the response, or do you have to login to see if it was approved or not?	You will first receive an automated reply confirming receipt of the ticket, then a custom reply (via email) from the SPARCS team including the decision for the extension/exception request.
Is there a limit on extension requests?	There is no set limit on how many extension requests can be received and approved for any period. Approval is at the discretion of the SPARCS team. Note: the team does consider previous extension requests when making determinations on approval. Continued extension request approvals would require that the facility show they are making progress towards submissions.
When you are out of compliance, can you request hospital owned data?	Yes, Hospital Owned Data (HOD) requests can be submitted via the SPARCS Intake and Compliance Zendesk site: https://sparcscompliance.zendesk.com/ . This data can be used to identify specific claim discrepancies and reconcile data that was submitted against what was accepted by SPARCS.
We received a notice for Q2 data compliance. The data being asked for is data that was required prior to our system acquiring the facility. We do not have access to any data that was prior to our acquisition date. How should we proceed?	If it was a transfer ownership and you no longer have access to that prior date. It is recommended that you submit a request for an exception at https://sparcscompliance.zendesk.com/ .



Does the new compliance and audit dashboard have the ability to display data for multiple facilities?	No, the dashboard only reflects data for a single selected facility.
Is there a plan to update the new compliance and audit dashboard with unresolved error totals?	There are no plans for this currently, but the SPARCS team will take it back for consideration.
Will the team continue to create and upload the compliance and audit PDF reports?	No, the PDFs are no longer produced given the introduction of the new Tableau reports. If this data is being used for research purposes, there is a governance process through which this data can be requested.
Are there any plans to incorporate the Tableau compliance metrics directly into the Optum submission module?	We are not able to add the link directly to the SPARCS submissions portal hosted by Optum, but the SPARCS compliance dashboard can be found quickly through a search engine or the link can be saved on your local web browser: https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/reports/dashboards/heatmap/ .

Technical and Coding-Related Questions

Question	Answer
Can Optum display the diagnosis code that require the POA rather than the element position in the CSV report?	As of July 30, 2026, the diagnosis code will be displayed in the error reports for claims rejected due to missing POA codes.
Is there way to get alerted if our entire claim file got rejected? We get the 999 file but there is no way to load it into our EMR.	A ticket will need to be submitted to Optum at https://customer care.optum.com/public/home.html . Optum will run it through a different system and respond with the cause of the rejection.
Do I need to go back and check for claims changes when submitting SPARCS data every month?	If changes are identified through your normal course of business, and the changes are subsequently made in your system, then the changes should be sent to SPARCS. SPARCS needs to make sure there is an accurate reflection of discharges at your facility throughout the year.
How do we know how to prevent duplication?	There are two main ways to ensure that duplicate records are not created: • Proper use of the frequency codes, where adjustments are frequency code 7 and voids are frequency code 8. • Proper use of CPT and HCPCS modifier codes, especially for multiple similar procedures within the same encounter. Refer to CPT and HCPCS coding guidelines for more information about using modifier codes. The SPARCS team also continues to investigate duplicate logic and will update the submitters with any changes. Full details of the duplicate logic can be found by consulting the SPARCS Transaction Information Companion Guide X12 Version 5010 posted in the Resources section at https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/submission/.
Was outpatient duplicate logic also updated, or just inpatient duplicate logic?	Only the SPARCS inpatient duplicate logic was updated. There are no plans to update outpatient duplicate logic at this time.
How long are the DUP/void reports available? Is there a way to get detailed info about which claims are already in SPARCS database?	Adjust/Void/Dup reports are available 180 days after submission. If you were not able to get this information, you would have to submit a ticket to Optum via the customer care hub (https://customer care.optum.com/public/home.html) to get that information. Hospitals can request extracts of their own data at any time by submitting a request from the SPARCS Intake and Compliance Zendesk site (https://sparcscompliance.zendesk.com).



Are we putting the new patient control number before or after in the NTE segment?	The new patient control number goes into the “Patient Control Number” field, and the previous patient control number goes into the NTE segment. Full details can be found in the SPARCS Transaction Information Companion Guide X12 Version 5010 posted in the Resources section at https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/submission/ .
How long after submission are you able to check for errors, if you didn't check the day after submission?	Reports remain on the portal for 180 days.
When will NDC codes be deactivated?	Claims are no longer evaluated for NDC code validity in order to be accepted into the SPARCS system.
What are the plans to accept race and ethnicity data that conforms to the new federal standards?	As of July 30, 2026, the SPARCS Race and Ethnicity Code Set has been updated to version 1.3.
Is there a list anywhere of which revenue codes apply to which services, i.e. AS, ED, IP and OP?	Yes, this information can be found in the SPARCS Compliance Protocol posted at https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/reports/ .
Canadian postal codes are alphanumeric – does the system accept letters?	Yes.
Would a technical question be sent to this email (sparcs.submissions@health.ny.gov) for formatting of data related to Canadian zip codes?	Technical questions should be sent through the Optum customer care hub at https://customercare.optum.com/public/home.html . SPARCS works with Optum weekly on various tickets and submitter questions, so issues will be discussed between both teams if SPARCS needs to be involved.
Received edit 86 for DX and patient gender mismatch. The patient is transgender. Please advise.	The edit has been disabled until the X12 framework can be corrected at the national level to handle sex and gender appropriately as two distinct data points.
Is it possible that the SPARCS Injury cause and place code set data file is posted earlier in the future, so that the systems can have updated files on October 1st?	The updates to the injury cause and place code set goes through an extensive review and testing process involving multiple subject matter experts and stakeholders. We post the code sets as soon as this process is complete, but cannot guarantee that this will be prior to 10/1.
Where on the X12 file (which fields and loops), should “place of injury diagnosis” be entered? Do we need to buy an updated implementation guide to get the exact specifications?	Place of injury diagnosis code should be entered as other diagnosis code in the 2300 claim information loop, “HI” segment, with the ABF qualifier. The ASC X12 Implementation Guide is a proprietary resource that must be purchased for reference. The SPARCS Transaction Information Companion Guide X12 Version 5010 posted in the Resources section at https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/submission/.



We have rejections for missing cause of injury and place of occurrence codes on Anesthesia accounts for the professional billing. Should this account type be included or excluded from SPARCS reporting?	Professional claims are not required by SPARCS submissions. SPARCS collects patient-level details on patient characteristics, diagnoses and treatments, services, and charges for inpatient and outpatient services (ambulatory surgery, emergency department, and outpatient services). Cause of injury and place of occurrence coding should be included on the facility SPARCS claim as applicable when identified on the Injury, Cause, and Place Code Set posted in the Resources section at https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/sparcs/submission/.
If facility has an Inpatient account and the coverage is only Medicare B, no Inpatient coverage, are you still expecting an Inpatient claim?	From a SPARCS perspective that is still considered an inpatient claim.
We have demographic rejections (admit source, admit type, etc.) for ED encounters where the patient leaves without being seen by a Provider. How should these be handled? The patient has left so the information is not available.	If the patient leaves without being seen by a provider, then there is no ED visit to submit to SPARCS.
Single letter last name is rejecting the claim even though it has the dash after the letter example: P-	The current guidance is to submit the single letter last name followed by "z" rather than "-".
Has anyone else been approached by organizations regarding errors in data that do not represent your data submission? We were notified that 100% of our submissions for a period were all "White" for ethnicity.	SPARCS recommends reviewing your SPARCS Claim mapping to ensure that values are not hardcoded in the claim dictionary or redacted in the actual claim file. SPARCS can provide you with a sample claim file from your facility upon submitting a request to SPARCS.Submissions@health.ny.gov. Please include your PFI in the request.
For updating birthweight, if you are updating a record 2 weeks later, is SPARCS looking for the coder to go outside of the encounter that they're coding?	Yes, we are looking for weight at birth, even if the baby was re-admitted.