

UDS (UNIFORM DATA SYSTEM) DEFINITIONS*

The **UDS** (Uniform Data System) is used by federally qualified health centers for reporting purposes. The REACH Healthcare Foundation requires its grantees to report service utilization data using UDS definitions of encounters and users.

Encounters (Visits) are defined to include a documented, face-to-face contact between a user and a provider who exercises independent judgment in the provision of services to the individual. To be included as an encounter, services rendered must be documented.

In the UDS the encounter criteria *are not* met in the following circumstances when the only services provided are lab tests, x-rays, immunizations, Tb tests and/or prescription refills. Such services as drawing blood, collecting urine specimens, performing laboratory tests, taking X-rays, and filling/dispensing prescriptions, in and of themselves, do not constitute encounters.

Provider is the individual who assumes primary responsibility for assessing the patient and documenting services in the patient's record. Providers include only individuals who exercise independent judgment as to the services rendered to the patient during an encounter.

Provider Types include: physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses (RN, LPN), dentists, licensed mental health provider (psychiatrist, psychologist, LCSW, and certain other Masters Prepared mental health providers licensed by specific states), substance abuse provider (e.g., credentialed substance abuse counselor, rehabilitation therapist, psychologist).

User (Patient) Users are individuals who have at least one encounter during the year, as defined above. Includes as users all individuals who have at least one encounter during the year. Each user is counted once and only once, even if s/he received more than one type of service or services.

Types Of Encounters Other Than Medical Include:

Case Management Encounter – An encounter between a case management provider and a user during which services are provided that assist patients in the management of their health and social needs, including patient needs assessments, the establishment of service plans, and the maintenance of referral, tracking, and follow-up systems

Education Encounter – An encounter between an education provider and a user in which the services rendered are of an educational nature relating to health matters and appropriate use of health services (e.g., family planning, HIV, nutrition, parenting, and specific diseases). Classes are not counted as encounters.

Mental Health/Substance Abuse Encounter – An encounter between a licensed mental health or substance abuse provider during which assessment and diagnosis, treatment, aftercare are provided.

* Reference: BPHC UDS Manual 2004 Revision – www.bphc.hrsa.gov