



SPRING NEWSLETTER

After a LONG winter here in the East, we at TriNet are looking forward to spring and summer, and hope that this finds you well. The consultants at TriNet decided to start this newsletter several months ago as a vehicle to share Decision Support ideas among our colleagues and customers in the healthcare industry. We welcome your comments and contributions!

MCKESSON APG USER CONFERENCE

FYI: McKesson is hosting the annual Amherst Product Group (APG) conference in Orlando, Florida on June 5-6, 2003. The theme of this year's conference is "Advancing Healthcare Performance Management." The conference is open to all Trendstar, Pathways Decision Support, Horizon Business Insight and Horizon Budget Planner customers. Unlike other national conferences ("InSight" or "TIMES") that some of us attended in the past, this conference is specifically for Decision Support users. We hope that you'll join us there!

TriNet is pleased to be a Gold Level Sponsor of the conference. We will have an exhibit table at the pre-conference reception on Wednesday evening (June 4). Please stop by and say hello (and pick up a free gift from TriNet, too!).

For more information about the conference, check out www.regweb.com/mckesson/apg

DECISION SUPPORT ONLINE DISCUSSION GROUP

This past fall, TriNet started an online discussion group, focused on the McKesson (HBOC) Decision Support systems. The purpose of this group is to exchange ideas about use of the McKesson Decision Support systems - Trendstar as well as Pathways Decision Support and Pathways Contract Management. If you're currently subscribed to this group, don't forget to use it to ask questions of your colleagues. Simply email to trinet_dss@yahoogroups.com If you're not currently a member, you can subscribe by sending an email to trinet_dss-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

TIPS AND TRICKS

We've put together a couple "tips and tricks" that you may find useful. Check them out:

LOOKUP TABLES IN TRENDSTAR

Lookup tables are a great way to make Trendstar more "user-friendly". Through lookups, users can access lists of available field values (e.g. departments, payors, charge codes, etc.) McKesson maintains the lookup tables for those fields with standard values, such as DRG's, HCPCS codes, and APC's. Lookups for other fields that are specific to the organization (e.g. departments) can be created by the user; either from a text file or from an existing Trendstar table. The CCA cost table, for example, can be used to create lookup tables for both departments and payors.

To add a lookup table, hit PF1 PF1 P from any point in the Trendstar menu, then PF1 A to add a lookup table. Enter the Trendstar filename and description of the lookup. If you are creating a lookup from a Trendstar table, hit ENTER under "Quick lookup key" and select from the following options:

APR-DRG's

APR-MDC's

Age summary groups

All HSL accounts

CPT4 codes: alphanumeric

CPT4 codes: numeric

DRG summary groups

DRG's

Department summary groups

Departments

HSL classifiers

HSL cost centers

HSL group 1

HSL group 2

ICD-9-CM diagnosis codes

ICD-9-CM procedure codes

MCA subaccounts

MDC's

Patient identification

Payor summary groups

Payors

Physician numbers

Physician specialty groups

Physician summary groups

Procedure names

Procedure summary groups

Zip code summary groups

After the lookup tables have been created, any Trendstar user can access them by hitting PF1 P (when prompted for values for that field), or PF1 PF1 P (at any point in the menu).

VIRTUAL NETWORK COMPUTING (VNC) - Ken Merbler, TriNet

Did you ever wish you could access your PC at work from home? Maybe you'd like to run some Trendstar reports or kick off a batch or two. Up until now, you'd need to buy another copy of your emulator software and set it up to dial in to Trendstar to do this. Once you were connected, you still wouldn't have access to the other software or files on your PC at work.

Now, through the magic of VNC, you can take control of your PC at work from home. These days, the PCs in most hospitals are connected to each other and to the internet through extensive networks which have been set up. VNC uses these networks to your advantage.

From your PC at home, you can either dial in, or use a high speed internet connection (cable modem or

DSL), to connect to another computer using VNC. There are several advantages to this. First of all, you would have complete access to all the files and software on your PC at work. You would be able to access Trendstar without the need to set up your emulation software on your computer at home. You can take advantage of your high speed internet connection if you have one, which means Trendstar access without using a telephone line. This type of setup comes in handy for training also, since others (TriNet, for example) can talk to you over the phone as they take control of your PC from miles away and show you how to run a specific application, while you watch it on your screen. Perhaps best of all, the software to do this is free and can be downloaded from the web.

The open source software which allows this is called REAL VNC, and can be downloaded by going to www.realvnc.com. It is a small program which can be set up on two PCs in about five minutes (it's true, I've done it). One PC (the PC taken over) runs the "server" program, and the other PC (the controlling PC) runs the "viewer" program. To connect the two, you'll need network access (cable modem, DSL or dial up), an IP address and a password. Some level of security is provided by the IP address and password, but the software allows you to set up greater security using something called SSH tunneling, which utilizes encryption. You can safely use this software through a firewall. Check with your I.S. department before you set this up, as you'll need their help and approval. If you have a home network, you can set this software up on your home PCs to try it out first. Depending on how fast your connections are, you will probably experience some minor delay issues (jerkiness) when controlling the other PC, but the software is quite useable.

We will have additional "tips and tricks" in future newsletters.

BENCHMARKING DATA

Have you thought about bringing Benchmark and Comparative information into your Decision Support analysis? Many organizations have successfully integrated benchmarking information into their Decision Support systems, to add value to the information produced in DSS, and to enable comparisons of their performance to that of other organizations. There is quite a bit of data available from a wide variety of companies.

Sharon Sellman (TriNet) has researched this topic, as part of a recent presentation on Benchmarking at the Philadelphia HFMA Decision Support conference. As part of her presentation, Sharon compiled a useful chart of available sources of benchmark information. Check out the attached file, and feel free to call Sharon with any questions: 610-995-0755.

Other articles and presentations written by TriNet consultants are available on the TriNet web site. Click on the link below to see a listing:

www.trinethealth.com/information_request_form.htm

TRINET HEALTHCARE : EXPERTS IN EDUCATION

Did you know that TriNet has provided on-site Trendstar and Decision Support education to its clients for over 12 years? Our consultants have over 30 years of combined experience in tailoring education classes to meet our clients' needs. Our customized training packages enable clients to use their own data at their own facilities. This "hands-on" approach allows the user to complete Work Sessions that allow them to not only understand the mechanics of the system, but also how to interpret and analyze the data. By including thought processes within the traditional education classes, TriNet consultants instruct the attendees on what their next step should be based on the initial interpretation of data. This type of training can lower the learning curve for new users and enhance the capabilities of the experienced user. TriNet also provides customized education for specific Case Studies and Data Analysis. Some examples are as follows:

Budget Analysis, Flexible Budgeting, Case-Based Budgeting, Productivity Analysis, Contract Performance & Modeling, Trendstar Auditing Techniques and Analysis, Looking at Comparative Data and Benchmarks, Developing Multi-Year Forecasts, Cost Accounting, Clinical Pathway Development and many more.

Our consultants are experienced in instructing large classes. On-site education is very cost effective!

McKesson's Decision Support solutions are very robust. Our experience allows us to show the user the best way to get the job done. Consider TriNet for your education needs!

We hope that this newsletter is of value to you. Look for future issues in the upcoming months.

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unsubscribe-dss@trinethealth.com

Please contact us with ideas and feedback, or for further information about TriNet.

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