

Memo in Email format to:

To: All Wlpop Contacts; Chief Financial Officers; WHA/IC Staff
Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2026 1:35 PM
Subject: August 2026: Update to OMB race and ethnicity collection changes
From: Case, Cindy <ccase@wha.org>

Good afternoon,

The Wisconsin Hospital Association Information Center (WHAIC) is providing an update to the June Survey regarding the OMB race and ethnicity collection changes.

As you may recall, WHAIC recently conducted a survey to better understand facility readiness and establish an appropriate timeframe for full implementation of the two new collection requirements: adding the Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) category and incorporating Hispanic/Latino into the race collection, eliminating the separate collection of ethnicity.

Based on the survey results, many facilities indicated that additional time, leadership engagement, and system preparation are needed to implement these changes. We also learned that, in some larger health systems, senior leadership may not yet be aware of the upcoming collection requirements. As a result, WHAIC is extending the timeline for full implementation to **January 2028**.

While the full implementation timeline is being extended, we strongly encourage facilities to continue moving toward compliance before Q1 2028 whenever possible. Throughout 2027, WHAIC will continue to provide training, guidance, technical support, and resources to help facilities prepare for implementation.

It is important that organizational leaders are aware of these changes and that appropriate staff have the time and resources needed to prepare their systems, workflows, and communications. We encourage you to share the status of your race and ethnicity data collection with appropriate leadership within your organization, particularly senior leadership, so that all necessary materials, system updates, and communications are in place and ready for implementation by **Q1 2028**.

To Recap

WHAIC will continue to:

- Collect ethnicity as a separate data element during the transition period.

- Provide guidance and expectations for updating race collection categories to include **MENA and Hispanic/Latino**.
- Work toward full implementation of the updated collection requirements by **January 2028**.

WHAIC's Focus During 2027

Throughout 2027, WHAIC will continue the following activities to support facilities:

1. **Provide additional training focused specifically on race and ethnicity collection and reporting**, including WHA Quality's *How to Ask* training.
2. **Provide additional WHAIC training on system updates and reporting expectations** for the revised race and ethnicity collection requirements, including Wlpop discharge data reporting and collection.
3. **Continue providing quarterly validation reports** that identify the race categories being submitted by each facility, including reporting of the two new categories.
4. **Continue providing validation reports** to identify whether facilities are submitting more than one race for patients, using data collected over the next six quarters.
5. **Work with facilities and vendors to provide technical assistance and support** as needed to prepare for implementation.

Thank you for your continued partnership as we work together to ensure a smooth transition to the updated OMB race and ethnicity collection requirements.

Cindy Case, BA, COC

Director, Data Management and Integrity

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