

Register for AQO and Get FREE Access to Online Meeting Product

Registration and housing are now open for [Advances in Quality & Outcomes: A Data Managers Meeting](#), October 18-20 in Chicago. This popular annual event highlights what's new with all three component databases in the STS National Database and offers valuable educational sessions on evidence-based practice to improve outcomes, as well as provides important networking opportunities for both seasoned and new data managers. New this year, attendees will receive free access to AQO Online for sessions corresponding to their registration! [Be sure to register](#) by Wednesday, September 20, for early bird pricing; after this date, registration fees will increase by \$100.

Avoid Payment Cut—Submit Data to CMS through STS

The STS National Database has been designated as a Qualified Clinical Data Registry for the [Merit-Based Incentive Payment System](#), and cardiothoracic surgeons participating in the Adult Cardiac Surgery Database (ACSD) are eligible to reap the benefits. Surgeons who consent to have STS submit Quality measure data to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on their behalf will avoid an automatic 4% negative payment adjustment in 2019. This service is FREE for STS members; non-members will each be assessed a \$500 fee. [Submit a consent form by October 31, 2017, to participate.](#) (You must create or sign in with an existing STS Web Portal username and password. If you need assistance locating your STS Web Portal login information, contact membership@sts.org.) If you have questions about participating in MIPS, contact Derek Steck, STS National Database Coordinator, at dsteck@sts.org.

ACSD Updates: Window Closing, Spec Upgrade, Anesthesia Module

Data Submission Window Closes in August

Data submission period #3 opened on June 5 for cases through June 30, 2017. This period will close on August 25. If you have submitted data prior to June 30, please remember to go back and resubmit *all* data through June 30 so that you have a complete year of data.

New ACSD Version Starts July 1

STS National Database leaders [recently sent a letter to ACSD participants](#) regarding version 2.9 of the ACSD, which will become active on July 1, 2017. The letter stressed how active surgeon involvement during the data capture process is key to collecting valid and useful data; it also provided links to resources from STS, including a [training manual, data collection forms, and surgeon worksheets](#).

While you may begin entering data into version 2.9 software, please note that you should not submit these cases to the ACSD data warehouse at the Duke Clinical Research Institute (DCRI) until submission period 4 begins on September 11. If you submit data using version 2.9 prior to this date, they will not be analyzed and you will need to resubmit during submission period 4.

Anesthesia Module Discontinued

For those sites participating in the separate anesthesia module, please note that **the anesthesia module will be incorporated into version 2.9 of the ACSD**. For cases starting July 1 and beyond, there no longer will be a separate module; sites will instead use their vendor software to submit data. These tips will help you with the transition:

- The last date to enter data into the current anesthesia module will be August 25, 2017, which coincides with the closing date of submission window 3 and includes cases through June 30, 2017. Cases performed on July 1 and after must be abstracted using version 2.9 software.

- In version 2.81 of the ACSD, sites that had patients return to surgery during the same hospital stay would enter a second anesthesia form into the module. This is not the case with version 2.9. Only anesthesia information for the index procedure should be entered. Do not enter additional cases during the same stay.

Continuous Data Submission for GTSD and CHSD Begins Soon

Continuous data submission will open next month for the General Thoracic Surgery Database (GTSD) and Congenital Heart Surgery Database (CHSD) fall harvests. Watch for more details from DCRI in early July.

	Data Submission Opens	Data Submission Closes	Reporting Period
GTSD	July 10	September 29	7/1/2014 – 6/30/2017
CHSD	July 17	September 29	7/1/2013 – 6/30/2017

Remember: To successfully submit your data file, your information must match what the Society and your vendor have in their records for the following fields: Vendor ID, Hospital Name, Hospital NPI #, Surgeon Name, and Surgeon NPI #. If you have questions about your account, contact Elizabeth Watkins, STS National Database Contracts Manager, at ewatkins@sts.org. More information, including detailed data submission instructions, is available at www.sts.org/harvestschedules.

Database Dashboard Pilot Testing Completed

Development of a new online reporting dashboard for the STS National Database is making significant progress. A month-long pilot just wrapped up, with 25 ACSD sites testing the dashboard. The Society thanks those who participated in the pilot and provided helpful feedback. The dashboard will offer interactivity and more detailed analyses of data from the national report PDF that participating sites currently receive. The dashboard is expected to be available this fall for ACSD participants, and GTSD and CHSD participants should receive access next year.

Read *Annals* Articles on Database Research

Summaries of recent research based on data in the STS National Database are now available on *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery* website.

- [The Society of Thoracic Surgeons Adult Cardiac Surgery Database: 2017 Update on Research](#)
- [The Society of Thoracic Surgeons General Thoracic Surgery Database 2017 Update on Outcomes and Quality](#)

Update Your Participant Account

If you need to make changes to your [Participant Contact Form](#), please note that the completed forms should be e-mailed to pcf@sts.org. Accurate and up-to-date contact information is essential so that your site receives all pertinent communications from STS. If you have questions about the process, contact Elizabeth Watkins at ewatkins@sts.org.