

CALINX Rx 2.0 Pharmacy Data Standard

What Is CALINX Rx 2.0?

CALINX Rx 2.0 is a standardized file format for electronically transmitting pharmacy data. A CALINX Rx 2.0 file contains a batch of records and each record represents a single dispensed prescription paid for by a health plan or other payer on behalf of its members. These batch files are intended to be sent monthly between contracted entities.

The CALINX Rx 2.0 file format is “fixed width.” There are no delimiters such as commas (,) or pipes (|) between fields; instead, fields fit within a defined range of columns. Each record has unique identifiers for patients, insurance, prescribing clinicians, dispensed medication, and prescription fill dates.

Why Is CALINX Rx 2.0 Needed?

The goal is to enable the efficient use of pharmacy data to improve care and avoid medical errors in California.

CALINX Rx 2.0 replaces CALINX 1.1, a file format that was first released in 2000. The original file format had not been updated for four years and was not consistently adopted in California.

Without a uniform standard, provider groups have been receiving pharmacy data

in a variety of formats, making it challenging to use and integrate. By adopting and strictly adhering to a single standard for transmitting pharmacy data electronically, providers groups will have better access to more timely and accurate pharmacy utilization data.

How Will CALINX Rx 2.0 Data Be Used?

Pharmacy data can be forwarded to treating physicians to provide them with a more complete picture of a patient’s prescription history, which can lead to better decision making. Pharmacy data can also be used for a number of administrative functions including:

- Self-reporting of Pay for Performance clinical measures to help maximize health plan quality bonuses.
- Integrating pharmacy data into clinical data repositories and disease registries to help manage patient populations.

Pharmacy data can also be used in conjunction with disease management and quality improvement programs by providing case managers and health educators with important prescription histories for the patients they treat.

Who Will Use CALINX Rx 2.0?

Six large California health plans have agreed to adopt the CALINX Rx 2.0 standard:

- Aetna
- CIGNA
- Blue Cross
- Health Net
- Blue Shield
- PacifiCare

Approximately 180 provider groups in California currently receiving pharmacy data electronically from any of the above plans can request pharmacy data in the new format.

How Was CALINX Rx 2.0 Developed?

CALINX Rx 2.0 was developed by the **California Clinical Data Project: Setting Standards** initiative. The initiative is convened by the California HealthCare Foundation and overseen by an executive committee representing provider organizations, health plans, commercial labs, hospitals, community clinics, purchasers, and state government.

Workgroups made up of technical experts from executive committee organizations developed CALINX Rx 2.0. The standard will be supported with validation software and toolkits, technical assistance, and a governance body to oversee maintenance and future updates to the standard.

Where Can I Learn More?

The CALINX Rx 2.0 standard, software tools, toolkits, and more are available on the CALINX Web site: www.calinxstandards.org.