# Flex Monitoring Team

 FAQ Document 

# Frequently Asked Questions:

## Content

## Q: Does the Flex Monitoring Team maintain an archive of CAH location data for previous years?

A: Yes, we maintain a record of the names, locations and bed sizes of CAHs by state. You may find our hospital location data page by clicking [here](http://www.flexmonitoring.org/data/critical-access-hospital-locations/) or by visiting [www.flexmonitoring.org](http://www.flexmonitoring.org) and selecting “Critical Access Hospital Locations” under the “Data” tab.

## Q: Does the Flex Monitoring Team have information on bed size for CAHs?

A: We do have information on bed size under the data tab on our webpage (click [here](http://www.flexmonitoring.org/data/critical-access-hospital-locations/) to be redirected to this page). However, we do not regularly update bed size in our data. We add and remove CAHs from the list based on various sources. Changes in bed size are not evident in these sources unless other hospital changes are reported (such as a closure, addition or other status change); thus, we do not report changes for hospitals’ bed numbers over time unless bed number changes are reported along with the other changes.

## Q: Does the Flex Monitoring Team maintain a list of CAHs that might soon lose CAH designation?

A: We do not currently maintain a list of this type.

## Q: Does the Flex Monitoring Team maintain a list of hospitals that have closed?

A: No, but a list of all rural hospital closures is available at the website of the North Carolina Rural Health Research Program. You may access this website by clicking [here](http://www.shepscenter.unc.edu/programs-projects/rural-health/rural-hospital-closures/).

## Q: Does the Flex Monitoring Team maintain a database for non-CAH hospitals?

A: We do not maintain a database of that type at this time.

## Q: How are peer groups determined in CAHMPAS, and what factors are used?

A: Peer groups are determined by hospitals’ net patient revenue, government ownership, provision of long-term care, and operation of a rural health clinic. These factors were determined in 2006 and reassessed again in November of 2016. They were found to be appropriate predictors in determining CAH financial performance and will continue to be utilized in CAHMPAS and accompanying reports. For more information, click [here](http://www.flexmonitoring.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/PB44.pdf).

## Q: Why isn’t system membership included as a peer group factor?

A: We currently do not have a reliable, timely national data source that can be used to identify system membership. If a data source becomes available, we will consider including system membership as a peer group factor as it can affect the financial indicators for CAHs that are owned by a system.

## Q: What is the source of the data in CAHMPAS?

A: The financial indicators are calculated by the Flex Monitoring Team using data from hospitals’ Medicare cost reports. The market indicators are calculated by the Flex Monitoring Team using data from Nielsen Claritas.

## Q: When are data updated in CAHMPAS?

A: Typically, data have been updated annually no later than March 31. Going forward, we will make every effort to update the twenty-three financial indicators on a quarterly basis. Some hospitals’ data will be missing in early quarters as their cost reports may not have been submitted by the time the data are released. The financial distress index will continue to be updated annually by March 31.

## Q: Can more current financial data be added to CAHMPAS?

A: The financial indicators are calculated by the Flex Monitoring Team using data from hospitals’ Medicare cost reports. By using the same data source for every hospital, we can ensure that the indicators are calculated consistently across CAHs. The Medicare cost reports are typically available eighteen to twenty-four months after a hospitals’ fiscal year end. Thus, the data in CAHMPAS are not current.

## Q: Can I use data that are more current if I have it available?

A: While data that are more current cannot be input into CAHMPAS, several tools allow users to analyze their own data. A spreadsheet is available on the Flex Monitoring Team website (click [here](http://www.flexmonitoring.org/publications/cahfir-resources/)) that allows users to calculate financial indicators using their own data. The reporting feature in CAHMPAS allows users to download all available financial indicators into a .csv file. Recent data can be added to this file to allow users to analyze trends over time.

## Why are my data missing?

A: Individual hospitals’ data may be missing for a variety of reasons. The most common reason is the lack of a Medicare cost report. CAHMPAS requires a cost report that covers at least 360 days in the fiscal year. Individual indicators may be missing because of data exclusion rules. These rules are included with the indicator definitions in CAHMPAS.

## What if I believe there is a data error in CAHMPAS?

A: The data in CAHMPAS are derived from the Medicare cost reports. If data look incorrect, users should first check with the individual or firm that completed the Medicare cost report. If there still appears to be an error in CAHMPAS, contact the Flex Monitoring Team at monitoring@flexmonitoring.org.

## Does CAHMPAS include financial data for rural hospitals that are not CAHs?

A: No, CAHMPAS is currently limited to CAHs.

## Technical

## Q: What is the recommended web browser for CAHMPAS?

A: We recommend that you use either Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome. Users in the past have experienced compatibility trouble with Internet Explorer and Microsoft Edge. Beginning in March 2018, users will have improved functionality with Internet Explorer, although they will not be able to use the “Save Image” button for the CAHMPAS graphs.

## Q: Though the graph works in CAHMPAS, my graph does not download properly as an image. What should I do?

A: You can troubleshoot any image download problems by selecting a different application with which to open your file. When prompted to “Open the file with…”, try selecting a PDF viewer or an internet browser as your application. When the file opens, you can then copy and paste the graph elsewhere or print it from that application. If you have further issues with the graph download function, please send us an email at monitoring@flexmonitoring.org.

## Q: CAHMPAS does not appear to be displaying properly. What should I do?

A: If the home screen or graphics are not displaying properly, you can try a hard refresh of your browser. In Windows/Linux, simultaneously hold down **Ctrl+F5**. If you have further issues with the display, please send us an email at monitoring@flexmonitoring.org.

## Q: Where can I find information on the state medians for financial indicators?

A: You can find our published State Medians Report documents by visiting [www.flexmonitoring.org](http://www.flexmonitoring.org) and selecting the “Publications” tab. If you are an authorized hospital, state or federal user, CAHMPAS can provide state medians for your financial indicators when you select each graphing function.

## Q: I am new to CAHMPAS and looking for materials to help with understanding the system. What resources do you provide?

A: The Flex Monitoring website provides a number of helpful resources for you to use. If you would like more information about financial indicators, you can check out our financial toolkit, which includes an indicator calculator and primer, located under the “Publications” tab at [www.flexmonitoring.org](http://www.flexmonitoring.org), If you would like help navigating the CAHMPAS system, we have PDF step-by-step instructions and tutorial videos located on our webpage at <http://www.flexmonitoring.org/cahmpas/>.

1. **Q: When I download and open saved images, the text is blurry and missing in places. What is happening?**

A: If you are unable to open unable to open a .png file in Windows Photo Viewer, try opening the file with another application (e.g., Adobe Acrobat, Paint, etc.). Sometimes .png images do not display properly in certain versions of Windows Photo Viewer.

## Contact

## Q: Whom do I contact to gain access to the CAHMPAS system?

A: CAHMPAS is password protected for the security of our hospitals. The only approved users for CAHMPAS are CAH CEOs, CFOs, State Flex Coordinators and officials from the State Offices of Rural Health. If you are one of these users, you will need to email us at monitoring@flexmonitoring.org and provide your name, position, organization/hospital, and city/state. If you are not one of these users, we appreciate your interest in CAHMPAS but unfortunately cannot provide you with access to this system.

## Q: Whom do I contact if I have forgotten my username or password?

A: You can contact us at monitoring@flexmonitoring.org.

## Q: Whom do I contact if I have further questions?

A: You can email us at monitoring@flexmonitoring.org.

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