



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

“I’m New to PHATE”

1. What is PHATE?

The Population Health Assessment Engine (PHATE) is a patient-centered online population visualization and management system that creates a “community vital sign for each patient and also shows Social Determinants of Health across a practice’s service area. PHATE utilizes patient data from the PRIME Registry to assign a community vital sign to an individual patient based on census tract characteristics.

2. How can I get access to PHATE?

To access PHATE you must be a registered user of the PRIME Registry. Learn more about registering [here](#).

3. Why do I want to use PHATE, how will it help me?

The reports and information provided in PHATE help clinicians and practices better understand patient risks in the context of their community in order to facilitate further risk assessments, recommendations, or community referrals.

4. Who can I contact if I have questions about how to use PHATE?

You may contact us at support@theabfm.org with any questions you may have about PHATE or the PRIME Registry.

5. Does PRIME offer training for PHATE?

Yes. We offer periodic webinar sessions related to PHATE, the PRIME Registry dashboard and other dashboard tools. You may register for one of our upcoming sessions [here](#).

“I’m Currently Using PHATE”

1. What is the definition of “My Community” in the PHATE tool?

My Community allows the user to view and download community characteristics in relation to the user’s service area. This area may be defined by the user, using their practice data from the PRIME Registry, selecting census tracts, or uploading patient addresses. A practice's community is defined as the [census tracts](#) that contain the highest penetration of the practice and comprise the desired percentage of total patients. Definitions that include 50% or 70% of patient population are recommended to find core community.

2. What is the definition of “Community HotSpots?” in the PHATE tool?

Community HotSpots allows the user to view and download data on hot spots or clusters of poor disease control or gaps in quality from the user’s electronic health record data, and view how those hot spots relate to the community characteristics.

3. What is the definition of “Community Vital Sign” and how is it calculated?

Community Vital Signs are aggregated community-level information about the neighborhoods in which our patients live, learn, work, and play. They convey contextual social deprivation and associated chronic disease risks based on where patients live. Community vital signs are calculated by the [Robert Graham Center](#).

4. How frequently is my practice data updated?

As frequently as your data are updated between your EHR and the PRIME Registry.

5. What is a Social Determinant and how frequently is this data updated?

Social Determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. (<https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/faqs/index.htm>)

6. If I upload patient location information, is there a recommended minimum and maximum number of patients I should load?

You must upload data for at least three (3) patients to utilize the Community HotSpots functionality within PHATE. There is no maximum.

7. Why can’t I see patient-specific data in PHATE?

All data in the PHATE has been de-identified in compliance with HIPAA.

8. What is the purpose and functionality of the percentage bar under “My Community”?

The percentage bar allows you to view different areas of patient concentration in the tool. This is based on the definition of a practice’s community as the [census tracts](#) that contain the highest penetration of the practice and comprise the desired percentage of total patients. Definitions that include 50% or 70% of patient population are recommended to find core community.

A detailed description of the methodology can be found in "[Geographic Retrofitting: A Method of Community Definition in Community-oriented Primary Care Practices](#)".

9. What is a census tract?

Census Tracts are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of the county that are updated by local participants prior to each decennial census as part of the Census Bureau's Participant Statistical Areas Program.