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Abstract (Summary)

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S. The Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) has provided guidelines for the diagnosis, staging, and treatment of COPD. Early diagnosis with spirometric confirmation offers the most favorable outcomes for those suffering from COPD. Spirometry can be completed easily in the primary care setting for those exhibiting symptoms or warning signs; however, there are an estimated 24 million people who remain undiagnosed. Once diagnosed, it is questionable as to whether or not these patients are being treated according to GOLD guidelines. This quantitative, descriptive study utilized a retrospective medical chart review supported by ACE Star Model of evidence-based practice to determine the prevalence of local primary care providers (PCPs) who are following the GOLD guidelines in the diagnosis and treatment of COPD and to provide objective data for further use in educating the PCPs. Data from 163 medical charts of eighteen primary care providers was collected and analyzed using simple and descriptive statistics. Patient charts reviewed were of those aged 40 and over with at least a 10-pack-year smoking history. The results of this study showed that spirometry was used for the purposes of diagnosis in 3.1% of the sample and that less than two-percent of the entire sample had been staged for disease progression. There were no appreciative differences between the types of providers in their practice patterns or between the practice sites.

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Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease provided guidelines for the diagnosis suffering from COPD. Spirometry can 24 million people who remain undiagnosed. This quantitative, descriptive study of local primary care providers (PCPs) educating the PCPs. Data from 163 charts reviewed were of those aged 40 and over. The purposes of diagnosis in 3.1% of the differences between the types of providers.

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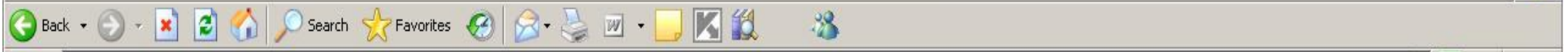
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Matrix Games in the Multicast Networks: Maximum Information Flows With Network Switching

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Abstract—Network coding for achieving the maximum information flow in the multicast networks has been proposed by Ahlswede, Cai, Li, and Yeung. They have demonstrated that the conventional network switching, without resort to network coding, is in general not able to achieve the optimum information flow that has been promised by network coding. A basic problem arising here is that, for a given multicast network, what is the *switching gap* of the network defined as the *ratio* of the maximum information flow in the multicast network with network coding to that only with network switching.

In the paper, by considering network switching as a special form of network coding, we make a complete *theoretical* and *computational* determination of the achievable information rate region for *multisource* multicast network switching. The multicast networks are allowed to be cyclic or acyclic with links having arbitrary positive integer or real-valued capacity. Network switching is essentially a problem of multicast-route packing in the multicast networks. Based on this, we use the theory of games to formulate the network switching as a *matrix game* between the first “player” of links and the second “player” of multicast routes in the multicast networks. We prove that the maximum achievable information rate at each probabilistic direction in the information rate region is the reciprocal of the value of the corresponding game. Consequently, the maximum achievable information rate can be computed in a simple way by applying the existing theory and algorithms for the computation of the value of a matrix game, especially for such multicast networks with links all having unit capacity as the Ahlswede–Cai–Li–Yeung multicast networks. For multicast networks with links having arbitrary positive real-valued capacity, by using convex optimization, we develop a simple and efficient iterative algorithm to find the maximum achievable information rates for multisource multicast network switching.

For single-source multicast networks whose links have arbitrary positive real-valued capacity, we present two *max-flow min-cut* theorems. The maximum information flow for single-source network switching is the minimum capacity among all *soft* link-cuts of the multicast network, while the maximum information flow for

same set of sink nodes, we make a comparison between the achievable information rate regions for network switching and network coding.

Index Terms—Achievable information rate regions, game theory, matrix games, max-flow min-cut theorems, maximum information flows, multisource multicast networks, multicast routes, network coding, network switching, route packings, set-covering problems, switching gaps.

I. INTRODUCTION

IN the seminal work of Ahlswede–Cai–Li–Yeung [2], they presented a major discovery that the encoding and decoding for transmitted and received information at every node in the multicast networks can improve the information rates at which the networks can multicast the information of single or multiple sources from the source nodes to their corresponding sets of sink nodes. In the conventional network switching, when the node in the network receives the bit information from its input links, it may replicate the received bit information and forward the copies to other nodes by its output links. In this way, the bit information from the source nodes will arrive at the sink nodes through the multicast routes in the networks. The sink nodes will receive a copy of the bit information sent at the source nodes. Ahlswede–Cai–Li–Yeung [2] found that, from the information-theoretic viewpoint, the node in the network can act as an encoder and a decoder. When the node receives the bit information from its input links, it may not only replicate but also transform the received bit information. The transmitted bit information at the node is a linear or nonlinear transformation of its received bit information. The sink nodes will eventually receive a coded transformation of the original bit information sent at the