VA INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER

DATA ISSUES BRIEF   **AUGUST 2007**

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:

VA DATA AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. DSS NDE File Structure Changes

DSS has reorganized the clinical National Data Extract Files (DSS NDE) by merging the inpatient and outpatient data into a single file for each VISN for each year. DSS is placing the reorganized files onto Direct Access Storage Devices (DASD) at the Corporate Franchise Datacenter (CFD) in Austin to make them more readily accessible. Moving the NDE files to DASD should improve performance and reduce user waiting time for these large files. Security requirements for access remain unchanged. The new name mask is: RMTPRD.MED.DSS.SAS.FY&&.VISN&&.ndename.

Return to Contents

2. 2007 Corporate Databases Monograph Issued
The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) National Data Systems (NDS) division of Health Informatics and Information Resources, VHA Office of Information, has issued the *2007 VHA Corporate Databases Monograph*. There are just over 100 national databases described in the monograph, and for each database there is an overview of features and a table of pertinent details about it. This monograph serves as a resource for VHA when performing analyses for policy, management and clinical decision making, as well as serving as a reference to health services researchers regarding the existence and content of national databases. The monograph is available on the VIReC website (the address is given in the Intranet version of this *Data Issues Brief*).

3. Pre- and Post-Deployment Health Data for Discharged and Non-Discharged Service Members
Department of Defense (DoD) deployment assessments (pre-deployment and post deployment health assessments since December 2005 and post deployment health *re*assessments since December 2006) are being pushed to the VHA via the Federal Health Information Exchange (FHIE) when service members are *discharged* from military service, with further updates for those patients who are referred to VA for follow-up. These data will also be available for *non-discharged* service members referred to a VA medical center. One-record-at-a-time access to these cases is provided through Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS) remote data view or VistAWeb. The VA Intranet provides more information (the address is given in the Intranet version of this *Data Issues Brief*).

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

4. August Clinical Informatics Cyber Seminar
The Cyber Seminars on Clinical Informatics, sponsored by VIReC, take place at 12 pm ET on the third Tuesday of each month. David C. Aron, MD, MS, Elizabeth O. Kern, MD, MS, and Susan R. Kirsh, MD are presenting the August seminar on Tuesday, August 21 on the topic: "Using Registries in Practice, Quality Improvement, Research, and Education." All three speakers are associated with the Cleveland VA Medical Center and have been involved with the development of a Diabetes Registry in VISN 10. Dr. Aron is the Co-Clinical Coordinator for the Diabetes QUERI. Participants are welcome to join the session on a "first come, first serve" basis. Information on the series can be found at: http://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/for_researchers/cyber_seminars/catalog.cfm. For further information contact Laurel Nevinslong at laurel.nevinslong@va.gov.

5. ResDAC To Hold Workshop on the Use of Medicare Data
The Research Data Assistance Center (ResDAC) will host an upcoming workshop in Minneapolis on October 22-24 on the use of Medicare data. CMS 101, "Introduction to the Use of Medicare Data for Research," is a basic workshop in Medicare administrative data. Registration for the workshop opened on August 1, and ResDAC encourages people to register as soon as possible. More information can be found on ResDAC's Web site at http://www.resdac.umn.edu/training/cms101mn.asp.

CONFERENCES

6. Society for Medical Decision Making Meeting October 21-24, 2007
The Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM) will meet in Pittsburgh PA October 21-24, 2007. Meeting registration is now open at http://www.smdm.org/. SMDM's mission is to improve health outcomes through the advancement of proactive, systematic approaches to clinical decision making and by providing a forum to connect and educate researchers, providers, policy-makers and the public. This year's meeting will explore the science of decision making and consumer-driven, individualized health care.

7. American Medical Informatics Association Annual Symposium November 10-14, 2007
The American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) Annual Symposium will be held in Chicago IL November 10-14, 2007. The theme of this year's symposium is "Biomedical and Health Informatics: From Foundations to Applications to Policy." As stated on their Web site, "The spectrum of topics includes basic information science, knowledge modeling, technology applications, design strategies, health information exchange and communications, public policy, regional and international developments, standards, bioinformatics and genomics, and more." More information can be found on the Internet at http://www.amia.org/meetings/f07/.