



## ***VA Information Resource Center***

### ***Data Issues Brief***

May, 2002

#### **1. VHA CIO Welcomes Researchers' Comments on the Health Data Repository Scope of Work**

The new Health Data Repository (HDR), a comprehensive clinical data warehouse, is in the planning stages by the VHA Office of Information, System Design & Development (SDD). SDD is welcoming comments on the draft document pertaining to the HDR project scope. The Intranet Web link to the document is:

[Redacted]

[Redacted], or a copy can be requested from VIReC (<mailto:VIReC@research.hines.va.gov>).

Please provide your feedback on the project scope directly to the HDR Project manager, Tim Cromwell via email at [Tim.Cromwell@med.va.gov](mailto:Tim.Cromwell@med.va.gov) or to VIReC for forwarding to the SDD.

#### **2. AAC Recreates Medical SAS Outpatient Event Datasets Due To Creation Error**

The Austin Automation Center (AAC) has discovered that a logic error existed in the program that created the Medical SAS Outpatient Event datasets for FY-2001 and FY-2002. Additionally, the related "Revised" Outpatient Event SAS datasets, a similarly produced set of datasets that receive updates for an extended period of time, were affected for the FY-1999 and FY-2000 datasets. When the Credit Clinic Stop Code (CLC) variable was populated its value was erroneously replicated from one record to the next for all the remaining blank Credit Clinic Stop Code variables in a given patient's health encounters occurring on the same date.

The datasets that were affected include:

MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.SE02  
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.SE01  
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SE02  
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SE01  
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SE00  
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SE99

This error could affect user summaries of total clinic stops or other workload that includes clinic stops from the affected datasets. The AAC has recreated all of these datasets with the erroneous variable values corrected. For more information on these changes please contact VIReC at [virec@research.hines.va.gov](mailto:virec@research.hines.va.gov) or (708) 202-2413.

### **3. Implementation of VHA National Hepatitis C Case Registry**

With the number of veterans infected with the Hepatitis C virus (HCV) expected to be high, the Under Secretary for Health has requested the creation of an electronic HCV case registry. This registry will monitor the clinical outcomes of patients with HCV infection, monitor the quality of VA HCV care, and identify any needed improvements in the VA system regarding patient treatment. Historical patient data back to 1996 will be initially collected to populate the registry. By June 2002, all historical data is scheduled to be collected and nightly production updates sent to the registry from all local VistA systems will commence. For further information, see the full directive at [REDACTED].

### **4. New Directive Contains Definitions for VHA Ambulatory Care Data**

VHA Directive 2002-023, "VHA Ambulatory Care Data Capture," dated April 12, 2002, directs Network directors to "ensure that the Patient Information Management System (PIMS) and Patient Care Encounter (PCE) software packages are maintained on all medical centers' VistA systems in accordance with nationally distributed software and software patches." It directs facility directors and chiefs of staff to ensure, among other things, that "clinical staff document clinical information in conformance with medical center documentation policies and by-laws, and in a format that conforms to the software requirements for defining the practitioner; the patient's active problems, diagnosis(es) or reason for visit; and, the service provided to the patient." As background, the directive contains definitions for elements of ambulatory care data, such as: provider, encounter, occasion of service, and active problems (purpose of visit). For further information, see the full directive at <http://www.va.gov/publ/direc/health/direct/12002023.pdf>.

### **5. The VA Medical Information Security Service Restructured**

As a result of reorganization at the VA level the VHA has been asked to re-evaluate the information security program within the Office of Information and bring it more into line with the current structure of the Office of Cyber Security. Therefore, the Medical Information Security Service (MISS) has been restructured. Effective immediately the MISS will become the Health Information Security Service (HISS). For more information about this restructuring refer to: [REDACTED].

*Data Issues Briefs* are developed by the staff of the VA Information Resource Center (VIREC) for the purpose of informing and updating VA researchers on current and pending happenings and changes regarding health data, databases, and medical informatics. *Data Issues Briefs* are produced on a monthly basis and are distributed through e-mail subscriptions. Previous releases are posted and available on the VIREC Web site at <http://www.virec.research.va.gov>. If you wish to receive future issues directly or have any suggestions or comment about the *Data Issues Briefs*, please send an e-mail message to the VIREC at [virec@research.hines.va.gov](mailto:virec@research.hines.va.gov) or call (708) 202-2413.