

Data Issues Brief: November 2002

1. NPCD / PTF Medical SAS Datasets Closed For Fiscal Year 2002

The Medical SAS Inpatient and Outpatient Datasets created from the VHA's National Patient Care Database (NPCD)/Patient Treatment File (PTF) have been finalized and closed for Fiscal Year 2002. For more information on the contents of these datasets or how to access them please contact VIREC.

2. HERC Launches New Intranet Web Site

The Health Economics Resource Center (HERC) has launched an intranet Web site that expands on information at the HERC internet site to include links to VA-specific resources such as the Annotated Patient Database Inventory, the VA office of Information, and intranet links for other VA centers. It also contains e-mail address for HERC staff and members of the VA Economics Expert list. The new site, accessible to users within the VA, is at [REDACTED]. All users continue to have access to the HERC Internet site: <http://www.herc.research.med.va.gov>.

3. New Database Research Opportunity

The Veterans Health Administration has announced that designated research funds are available to support research focused on potential long-term health effects of exposures and risk factors among veterans of hazardous deployments, such as the Gulf War, Project SHAD, Bosnia/Kosovo, or Afghanistan. This is an initiative of the Office of Research and Development (ORD), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Proposed research may make use of existing health care use databases. For full information, see the announcement on the Research and Development Service Internet Web site (<http://www.va.gov/resdev/fr/ProgramAnnouncementDeploymentHealthIssues.pdf>).

4. NIH Creates 11 Specialized Centers of Research

Eleven Specialized Centers of Research (SCOR) on Sex and Gender Factors Affecting Women's Health have been established by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH). Funding for the SCOR program will total approximately \$11 million per year for 5 years. Research priority areas include mental health, reproductive health, pain disorders, and urinary tract health. For details, see: <http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/oct2002/od-28.htm>

5. Latest Issue of *VIREC Insights* Published

The Summer 2002 issue of *VIREC Insights* is entitled "Researchers' Introduction to KLFMenu Pre-Defined Reports & Dataset Contents" and is posted on the VIREC Web site at: http://www.virec.research.va.gov/virec_insights.htm.

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 or call (708) 202-2413.