

VIReC UPDATES:

1. Change in Speaker for November 21 Clinical Informatics Cyber Seminar

Anna McDaniel, DNS RN will present on November 21 "Consumer Health Informatics: Using Technology to Enhance Partnerships with Our Patients." Dr. McDaniel is Director of the Health Informatics Graduate Program in the School of Informatics and Professor in the School of Nursing at Indiana University. The Cyber Seminar will take place at 12 pm ET. Interested parties should go to http://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/for_researchers/cyber_seminars/catalog.cfm. Participants are welcome to join the session on a "first come, first serve" basis. For further information contact Laurel Nevinslong at laurel.nevinslong@va.gov.

VA DATA AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS:

2. Access to Real SSN Processing at VHA AAC Now Available at 3 Levels

The National Patient Care Database (NPCD) at the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Austin Automation Center (AAC) has made real SSN processing of NPCD data from the AAC available at three levels as of 10/10/06. Different functional task codes are now available for real SSNs at station level, VISN level and national level data. Higher level access allows access at lower levels but not vice versa. Report level (station, VISN or national) must be included in the researcher's programming request for data. For more information, go to the NPCD homepage on the VA Intranet (address given in the Intranet version of this *Data Issues Brief*).

3. Year End Processing of VA Files Frequently Used by HSR&D Researchers

Here is an update on the year-end processing of national files frequently used by HSR&D researchers.

Medical SAS Inpatient (PM06, PMO06, XM06, PB06, PBO06, XB06, PP06, PPO06, XP06, PS06) - These files were processed over the weekend of October 21 and 22 and were available as of October 23.

Medical SAS Inpatient Encounter (IE06) - This file was processed October 23 and was available as of October 24.

Medical SAS Outpatient (SE06, SF06) - These files were processed over the period of October 23 to November 6. The SE final FY2006 file was published on October 28. The SF final FY2006 file was published on November 6. Extra processing was needed to remove duplicate records from the SF FY2006 file.

3. Year End Processing of VA Files Frequently Used by HSR&D Researchers (continued)

Medical SAS Note: Facilities may submit updates (additions and changes) to the MedSAS files for the fiscal FY2006 files during all of FY2007. The update records will be processed quarterly into a file with “revised” embedded into the file Medical SAS file name (e.g., MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.PM06). In general researchers are advised not to use the revised datasets because by their very nature these data sets will not always give the same results. If used, researchers should be careful to record and explicitly state the date these files were accessed.

DSS NDE: The year-end clinical DSS NDE files are scheduled to be available in January 2007. Unlike Medical SAS files, the DSS NDE files are not revised once the year-end processing is completed.

4. New Issue of DSS Newsletter Available

The Decision Support Office (DSO) has released the October/November 2006 issue of *DSS Matters*. Announced in this issue is the decision to implement the VHA’s Decision Support system (DSS) as the sole managerial cost accounting system for the Department of Veterans Affairs as of October 1, 2007 (to include the VHA, the Veterans Benefits Administration [VBA] and the National Cemetery Administration [NCA]).

New and enhanced DSS reports include workload and cost reports for intermediate products produced by specific rehabilitative and supporting services (e.g., occupational and physical therapy, blind rehabilitation, social work service). Another important addition is the introduction of FEE data into DSS beginning in FY07. This will provide a single database for the capture of FEE payments across all services ranging from hospitals to professionals to pharmacies. The DSS newsletter is available from the DSS homepage on the VA Intranet (address given in the Intranet version of this *Data Issues Brief*).

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:

5. Database and Methods Cyber Seminar December 5

VIREC’s Director, Denise M. Hynes, PhD, RN, will present on December 5 “Using VA Lab Results in Research.” The Cyber Seminars on Databases and Methods, sponsored by VIREC, take place at 1 pm ET on the first Tuesday of each month. Interested parties should go to http://www.hsrdr.research.va.gov/for_researchers/cyber_seminars/catalog.cfm. Participants are welcome to join the session on a “first come, first serve” basis. For further information contact Laurel Nevinslong at laurel.nevinslong@va.gov.

6. Clinical Informatics Cyber Seminar Series December 19

Richard Frankel, PhD, will present on December 19 “The Effect of Computers at the Point of Care: Practical Implications for Physicians and Patients.” Dr. Frankel is Professor of Medicine and Geriatrics and a Senior Research Scientist at the Regenstrief Institute, Indiana School of Medicine. He is also a senior scientist in the Center for Implementing Evidence-Based Practice Health at the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center. The Cyber Seminars on Clinical Informatics, sponsored by VIREC and the Center of Excellence on Implementing Evidence-Based Practice, take place at 12 pm ET on the third Tuesday of each month. Participants are welcome to join the session on a “first come, first serve” basis.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DISSEMINATE TO COLLEAGUES! *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 monthly. All issues are available on the VIREC Web site at <http://www.virec.research.va.gov>. If you wish to receive email notification of future issues or have any suggestions or comment about the *Data Issues Briefs*, please send an e-mail message to the VIREC at virec@va.gov or call (708) 202-2413.