



VA Information Resource Center

Data Issues Brief

August, 2001

1. Revised NPCD Outpatient SAS Datasets Available at Austin Automation Center

When generating the FY'97-FY'00 NPCD Outpatient Medical SAS Diagnosis (SG) Datasets, the processing did not retain the correct order of ICD-9-CM code variables for primary (DXLSF) and secondary (DXF2-DXF10) diagnoses. The AAC has created new datasets that correctly reordered these variables. These datasets, which are stored on tape, are named:

MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SG00 (SG00)
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SG99 (SG99)
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SG98 (SG98)
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SG97 (SG97)

In addition, the FY'97-FY'00 NPCD Outpatient Medical SAS Event (SE) Datasets did not retain the correct order of the variables for provider ID (PROVID1-PROVID10) and provider type (PROV1-PROV10). The AAC has created new datasets that correctly reordered these variables. These datasets, which are stored on tape, are named:

MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SE00 (SE00)
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SE99 (SE99)
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SE98 (SE98)
MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SE97 (SE97)

If you have any questions or concerns about these revised datasets please contact Cyndi Cavalier, MDP Analyst, at (512) 326-6728 or cyndi.cavalier@mail.va.gov.

2. HAIG/QUERI -Diabetes Mellitus Database

Representatives from the HSR&D Quality Enhancement Research Initiative Diabetes Mellitus Coordinating Center (QUERI-DM) and the Office of Policy and Planning's Health Analysis & Information Group (HAIG) presented an overview of the HAIG/QUERI-DM database and access procedure at the June 2001 meeting of the QUERI Data Issues Workgroup. The database is populated by data extracted from VistA submitted by VA facilities. Variables of interest include vital signs and select laboratory and pharmacy data.

The HAIG and the QUERI-DM have had a close working relationship over several years. A report released in October 2000, *Diabetes in VHA – Patient Demographics/Comorbid Conditions/Outcomes, FY99* by the HAIG in collaboration with VHA's Office of Patient Care

Services, Centers for Disease Control, American Diabetes Association and the QUERI-DM summarizes information pertaining to the burden of illness associated with diabetes mellitus patients in the VA Health Care system. To see this report, go to the HAIG Web site:

For further information about the HAIG/QUERI database and/or other research being conducted in diabetes, contact Sarah Krein, Ph.D. (skrein@umich.edu) from the QUERI-DM Coordinating Center and/or Laura Reisinger (Laura.Reisinger@med.va.gov) from the HAIG.

3. Health Data Repository: A New IT Direction

At the VIREC Steering Committee Meeting July 19, 2001, Chairperson Catherine Pfeil, Ph.D., gave a presentation entitled, "Next Generation VistA: Impact on Research." According to Dr. Pfeil, "the most significant ... activity underway [in the Office of Information] that will be of value to HSR&D and the VIREC is the implementation of the Health Data Repository." The Health Data Repository, or HDR, is the next step toward VHA's electronic clinical record goal of integrating patient data across sites, and eventually across the organization. The HDR developers will create new structures for the final common pathway for all types of clinical data (text, image, etc.). The HDR will become the primary source of data for databases frequently used by researchers such as: the National Patient Care Database (NPCD) and, subsequently, the medical SAS datasets, the Decision Support System (dSS), and other derived data warehouses and data marts. The HDR is being developed using software from the 3M Corporation.

The VistA-to-HDR data feeds will be tested and validated over the next year and the projected timeline for implementation of the HDR is currently estimated to be approximately 5 years. The VIREC will keep abreast of the HDR activities and will update researchers on its progress. To learn more about the details of the Health Data Repository, including the evaluation, a brief project description, the benefits of installation, justification of work, and other background/supporting material, please visit the Office of Information's System Design and Development Web site:

4. Seminar on Federal and State Databases Offered

The Academy for Health Services Research and Health Policy is offering the fourth in a series of seminars in health services research methods using Federal and State databases. The meeting will take place at the Double Tree Hotel in Rockville, Maryland, November 5 - 7, 2001. Researchers interested in attending or who wish to have additional information, please visit the Academy Web site at: www.academyhealth.org/seminars/fall2001/register. VIREC Director, Denise M. Hynes, Ph.D., will be coordinating the seminar on VA databases.

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 direct, please send an e-mail message to the VIREC at virec@research.hines.va.gov or call 708-202-2413. If you have any suggestions or comments about the *Data Issues Briefs*, please e-mail Diane C. Cowper, Editor, at cowper@research.hines.med.va.gov.