VA Information Resource Center
Data Issues Brief
September 2000

1. AAC Schedules EOY Closeouts

The official closeout for the end-of-year (EOY) ambulatory care, PTF, and Census databases is Friday, October 13, 2000. The Austin Automation Center (AAC) will process all data received in Austin by that time and generate the EOY SAS files for each dataset that weekend. Since the AAC will delay their processing to pick up all late transmissions, they will most likely not have all the SAS files complete by the following Monday morning. Please wait until further announcements before looking for the files.

2. RAI/MDS Update

The objective of the Implementation Phase of the Resident Assessment Instrument/Minimum Data Set (RAI/MDS) Project is to implement an automated, commercially available, long-term care patient assessment tool in all VA nursing homes, Intermediate and Sub-acute care areas surveyed under JCAHO long-term care standards. The Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care (OG&EC) recommended, and the VHA Undersecretary for Health approved, the adoption of an automated HCFA standardized RAI/MDS for use in VA to facilitate the development of standardized, comprehensive, accurate, and reproducible assessments for VA patients. For updates on the current status of the RAI/MDS project, visit the Web site: http://vaww.its.cio.med.va.gov/its/project_status/raimdsstat.htm.

3. OI Top Issue - **Hepatitis C**

The Web site of the Office of Information (OI), ███████████████████████████████, contains a list of the top priorities for September 2000. An Update on the Emerging Pathogens Initiative (EPI) is provided under the heading "Hepatitis C." Specifically, four patches have been developed to update the EPI database with Hepatitis C data. Installation of Clinical Reminders software, a prerequisite, was mandated by a Directive in July 2000. Proper set-up is necessary to ensure Hepatitis C data are appropriately transmitted to the EPI Database. As of August 21, 2000, 122 out of 131 VA facilities have installed Clinical Reminders. To ensure that all sites appropriately implement the patches, installations and release of the component patches have been coordinated with VA facilities. All sites are expected to have patches installed by September 15, 2000. User instructions and guidance can be found at http://vista.med.va.gov/reminders.

4. Health Care Security & Privacy -- Complying with HIPAA

Market*Access and The Potomac Forum will present a one day conference and training on the security and privacy elements of the HIPAA legislation. The conference will be a "how to" using industry best practices. Federal health care program managers will present their requirements and programs for implementing this important new set of security and privacy measures. The theme of the conference, "Creating a HIPAA Roadmap to Implementation using Best Practices, Lessons Learned, and Technology Solutions," will be held November 1, 2000, at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center

in Washington, D.C. To register by phone or to request more information: Call Colleen Harbison at 301-652-0810 or by e-mail at charbison@marketaccess.org.

5. NAHDO to Hold 15th Anniversary Meeting
The National Association of Health Data Organizations (NAHDO) will be holding its annual meeting entitled " Healthcare Quality and Accountability: Information Takes Center Stage" on December 4-5, 2000, at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. This conference is designed to highlight the most current, up-to-date advances in health data, research, information technology, and health policy. Dr. Kenneth Kizer, CEO and President of the National Quality Forum and formerly VA Secretary of Health, will be one of the keynote speakers at the meeting. Dr. Kizer will share his vision of the national quality agenda and how states can participate. Additional information about the meeting can be obtained through - Telephone: 801-587-9104, E-Mail: cchen@nahdo.org, Website: http://www.nahdo.org.

6. Long-Distance Learning Available
The Public Health Foundation has an online distance-learning clearinghouse, "TrainingFinder.org." In one central website, public health professionals of all disciplines can search the most comprehensive database of distance learning course listings. This service is free to both users and submitters. To search, browse, or submit public health distance learning course listings, visit http://www.trainingfinder.org.