



Intranet addresses have been removed from this document. Intranet links are available on the Intranet version of this publication. For more information, please go to VIReC's Redaction Information web page: <http://www.virec.research.va.gov/References/Redactions.htm>

### 1. DSS National Pharmacy Data In SAS Datasets

The DSS Program Office, in collaboration with the VISN Support Services Center (VSSC), has created SAS datasets of the DSS National Data Extracts for inpatient and outpatient pharmacy utilization and costs. The pharmacy data are available for FY2002 and for FY2003 to date (last run being May 23, 2003). This extends the complement of national DSS of SAS datasets to include the following:

DSS National Data Extract (NDE) SAS Dataset	Fiscal Year (FY) Data Available
Discharge	1999
Treating Specialty	1999
Outpatient	1999
Account Level Budget Cost Center	2000
Radiology Procedure	2002
Lab Test ("fact-of-lab")	2002
Pharmacy	2002

Information about obtaining access to these datasets is available on the VA Intranet at [redacted]. From the KLFMenu site, under the heading "Reports" in the left column, choose "DSS" and then "DSS Reports." This will open the reports page. Choose "National Data Extracts (NDE) Reports." If you want to get information about access to the SAS datasets, after "National Data Extracts (NDE) Reports," choose the small heading at the top of the page that says "Information about Reports," and then "NDE File & SSN Access."

### 2. Decision Support System (DSS) Reports At "One Stop Shop"

On July 2, 2003, the Decision Support System (DSS) announced the launch of a new "One Stop Shop" Web site for DSS reports and related information. The site is the result of collaboration between VSSC and the DSS Program Office. Access to the site is via the VA Intranet, at [redacted] or [redacted].

### 3. VA Meta Data Registry (MDR) Now Available

The VHA Office of Information, National Data Systems, has issued Version 1.0 of the VA Meta Data Registry (MDR). This is an authoritative source of reference information about the representation, meaning, and format of primary stores of data collected and managed by the VA. The MDR includes code sets and data standards adopted by VA, along with data element definitions, permissible values, the systems in which a particular data element is stored, and other information. It currently contains information for the SAS inpatient and outpatient data sets. The MDR project team is working to define the interface between the MDR and the Health Data Repository (HDR) and to map data elements from Vista to standard HDR data sets. Version 1.0 of MDR is available at [redacted].

#### 4. Researchers Presenting at ITC 2003

The Information Technology Conference, ITC 2003, being held at the Austin Convention Center August 4-7, 2003, will include at least four sessions presented by VHA researchers. They are:

- *ATHENA DSS - Successful Implementation of Guideline-based Decision Support in VA Clinics.* Faculty will demonstrate an automated clinical decision support system, ATHENA DSS, that uses a hypertension guideline knowledge-base, combined with individual patient clinical data, to generate recommendations that are displayed in a pop-up window in CPRS. The clinical impact of the system is being studied in a multi-center trial. Faculty: Bob Coleman, Mary Goldstein, M.D. Thursday 9:15AM - 11:30AM (Meeting Room 13B)
- *DSS Research Partnership.* Co-presented by Health Economics Resource Center (HERC) and VIREC, the session will address the contribution of DSS data to VA healthcare research and data quality improvement. Faculty: Paul Barnett, Ph.D. , Magdalena Berger , Denise Hynes, Ph.D , Matthew Maciejewski, Ph.D , Elisabeth McSherry, MD , Wei Yu, Ph.D Tuesday 8:00AM - 10:15AM (Meeting Room 12B)
- *Informatics Strategies to Support Evidence-based Practice.* VIREC and representatives of the Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) will share insights into the utility of VHA information systems for evidenced-based practice, focusing on the use of clinical reminder software and other VistA packages, and linkage with workload data. Faculty: Denise Hynes, Ph.D , Ruth Perrin , M.A., Joanne Stevens, RN Wednesday 10:30AM - 11:30AM (Meeting Room 17B)
- *VIREC: How It Fosters Best Practices Using VA Data for Research.* Speakers will address how VIREC helps staff better use VA and select non-VA data. Discussion includes various VA and non-VA databases that VIREC supports, known data quality issues in VA databases, and new online research user guides on FY2002 medical SAS datasets. Faculty: Patricia A. Murphy, M.S., Min-Woong Sohn, Ph.D. Monday 9:15AM - 10:15AM (Live Oak 8A)

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 and are distributed through e-mail subscriptions. Previous releases are 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.