

NHANES Open Space

September 11-12, 2003

Session Title: Food Security (FS) 9/11/03 (Session 3, rm 5101)

Session Headlines:

Background on Food Security (FS):

Chair was part of nutrition and overweight HP 2010 objective group. Do we have the right take on FS? FS is single objective in HP 2010.

How would we define, measure FS alternatively?

In NHANES, we measure FS using questions derived in research studies. 18-item scale used US Household FS Module/Measure—consistent with FS definition published by Anderson in J Nutrition 1992

FS defined as inability to get kinds of foods for family one wants in kind of ways that are socially acceptable ways. Brings in kinds and amounts of foods one wants to be able to feed themselves and their family. Moves into severity issues—cutting size of meals and amounts of foods and eventually into feeding children or going without.

Cut points: Based on interagency government & academic groups.

Food insecurity with/without hunger. Also have severity for hunger- cutting amounts, not eating for an entire day. Questions tied to money to eliminate voluntary dieters...”cause there was not enough money for food.”

Food assistance program participation asked in NHANES—WIC, Food Stamps, school meal programs, Meals on Wheels

Data release issues: data disclosure problem/concern.

NHANES oversamples low income—12% nationally report food security

Better Approaches to ask about Food Security (FS)???

- Comparability would argue for keeping tools the way they are
- Community HANES effort could really oversample risk groups

- Same instrument used in more communities would be useful.
- Cultural appropriateness of the use of NHANES FS instrument in other settings, groups? Some groups might have different experiences with FS
- How people cope with FS, adjust for their FS problems—might differ among tribes, migrants, rural communities
- What are the other pulls on income that may result in FS such as health care or housing costs? NHANES could include this.
- Official 6-item short module also used—fairly comparable, but does not focus on kids. On ERS website (“short form”)
- US Food Security Module can be used. Also CPS and SIPP also include FS modules. Health endpoints not there though; SIPP has longitudinal endpoints—Craig Gunderson’s research reported from conference lit.
- From public policy standpoint, need to be able to link FS information sources
- Popkin’s study reports on race/ethnicity groups.
- NHANES 99+ sample set up for longitudinal component –could examine long-term outcomes related to FS issue
- Policy issue: Need to incorporate research questions that can be answered by surveys and use them to promote surveys. WIC undergoing tremendous scrutiny, ditto for obesity, dietary supplements related to FS issues. Is there higher incidence of birth defects related to SES and FS?? Here the foods and food insecure groups can be studied.
- Food patterns of food secure/insecure can be examined and health outcomes can be looked at.
- Designated/Community HANES studies (DHANES): Need to do what’s necessary to be sure the info is released and available. Link to dietary results of interest in particular.
- Could release FS info grouped into different types of categories.
- FS and dietary intake data—Where they are in the cycle of poverty/need that are not addressed in 12 month time frame used for many questions—time frame for examining income, nutrition and health issues. CPS does ask last 12 month and 30-day questions. When did you use your WIC vouchers last? Do your income, WIC voucher, Food Stamp benefits last the entire month?

Next Steps/Action Items:

- Release NHANES data soon!
- Link to other NHANES dietary data sources of great interest
- Longitudinal follow-up would be very useful
- Patterns of eating and food use: Use of food as behavior modification-reward or punishment poorly understood, but of interest and links to children's health
- Behaviors linked to folks with good health outcomes and protective behaviors vs. What's the problem?
- Use NHANES to identify the "healthy profile"—healthy behavior indicator related to endpoints. The 10-30 yr (potential risk) and 60-85 yr groups (successful agers)
- Could convene a group to look at things that are good, valid indicators of healthy living
- Example: Weight Loss Registry looking at successful losers—Rita Wing
- Look at headlines from Healthy Lifestyles and Stress Reduction Forum discussion!! Cortisol mentioned.
- Social belonging—work, home, religious communities incorporated in studies with older folks. Might have different indicators for younger groups as indicator of social support and connectedness
- FS and mental health status link should be retained in data systems—school problems in youth from food insecure HH, even when income controlled for.
- Action Item: Definition of food security: Different terminology? Universal definition needed for community? (Comment: Food security means something different since 9-11 event) Categorization can be useful as Kathy Radimer described it
- Association of FS with obesity data.