

MEPS

Medical Expenditure Panel Survey



Medical Care Provider Participants' Corner



Medical Care Provider FAQs

1. Why should medical care providers participate?
2. How are medical care providers chosen for the MEPS Medical Provider Component?
3. Why didn't you get all of the information needed from the patient?
Why collect information from the medical care providers?
4. How long will it take to provide the needed information?
5. Will the medical care providers be compensated for providing this information?
6. Will a medical care provider be contacted more than once?
7. What specific information is needed from medical care providers?

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1. Why should medical care providers participate?

Your participation will contribute to an important effort to develop an accurate and comprehensive picture of health care expenditures in the United States. The availability and cost of health care is an issue of major concern to individuals and families, to employers, to health care providers, and to public and private policy-makers across the country. For private planning as well as for public policy decisions, we all benefit from having accurate information available to inform our deliberations. By signing the MEPS Authorization Form, participants have asked you to share their data with the study.

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2. How are medical care providers chosen for the MEPS Medical Provider Component?

Medical care providers are identified by participants in the MEPS Household Component as sources from which they received health care. These household participants signed HIPAA-compliant forms authorizing and requesting each of their medical care providers to release the information sought by the study. Practitioners who provide services within the hospital but bill separately from the hospital are identified by the participating hospitals.

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3. Why didn't you get all of the information needed from the patient? Why collect information from the medical care providers?

It is often difficult for people to answer questions about the specific health care services they receive and about the cost of those services, which are often paid in full or in part by third party sources. We contact medical care providers to give us information to supplement and verify the information provided by household participants.

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4. How long will it take to provide the needed information?

It usually takes between 5 and 10 minutes per patient. The time it takes generally depends on how many medical events are asked about and the accessibility of the medical provider's records.

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5. Will the medical care providers be compensated for providing this information?

Although we do not routinely provide compensation to participants, we will reimburse reasonable charges for staff time spent responding to our request and/or for copying and mailing costs.

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6. Will a medical care provider be contacted more than once?

It is possible that a medical care provider will be contacted more than once to clarify a response and/or to ask about other patients. Because MEPS is a continuous on-going survey, a provider may also be contacted again in future years if it is identified as a source of medical care by other MEPS household participants.

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7. What specific information is needed from medical care providers?

For each patient, we need information about services provided during a specific calendar year. For each event of service, we need:

- the date of service
- diagnoses (ICD-9 or DSM 4 codes)
- services provided (CPT-4, DRG, or other relevant codes)
- full established charge
- method of reimbursement (fee-for-service or capitated)
- sources that paid for the service
- amount paid by each source