AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY

MEPS+HCUP DATA USERS' WORKSHOP
TWO-DAY COMPUTER HANDS-ON

AHRQ CONFERENCE CENTER
Rockville, MD

SEPTEMBER 28-29, 2009

AHRQ CONFERENCE CENTER
Rockville, MD
SEPTEMBER 28-29, 2009

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

AHRQ is conducting a two-day workshop on the use of two of the Agency's data resources—the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP) and the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey Household Component (MEPS-HC). Both data resources provide national, regional, state, and local-level healthcare data. The workshop offers an overview of the two data resources on the first day and separate intermediate-level hands-on training for HCUP and MEPS on the second day. Attendance of the Day-1 HCUP overview session is recommended but is not a requirement for participation in the Day-2 HCUP intermediate workshop. Attendance in MEPS Day-1 is mandatory for those planning to attend Day-2 of MEPS Hands-on training. Full details are in the **Workshop format** section on page 2.

Purpose of the workshop

The purpose of the workshop is to provide an overview of the HCUP databases and software tools, and the MEPS-HC public use medical expenditures and conditions data files. Additionally, attendees will receive intermediate-level hands-on training on their choice of either HCUP or MEPS. Practical information and exposure to data files will be provided. A computer will be available to each participant for the hands-on training. For HCUP, participants will work with subsets of HCUP databases to produce healthcare services statistics. For MEPS, there will be an opportunity to construct analytic files using the MEPS-HC with the assistance of AHRQ staff.

Description of MEPS and HCUP databases

Here is a brief description of each. For more details, please visit respective websites:

HCUP: www.ahrq.gov/data/hcup/

HCUP is a family of health care databases, software tools, research publications, and support services created through a Federal-State-Industry partnership and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). HCUP provides health care databases for research and policy analysis, as well as tools and products to enhance the capabilities of the data. HCUP is the largest collection of publicly available, multi-year hospital care (inpatient, outpatient, and emergency department) data in the United States, with all-payer, encounter-level information beginning in 1988.

HCUP databases and tools enable research on a broad range of health research and policy issues at the national, regional, state, and local market levels, including cost and quality of health services, medical practice patterns, access to health care, and outcomes of treatments.

MEPS: www.meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/

The **Medical Expenditure Panel Survey** is a set of large-scale surveys of families and individuals, their medical providers (doctors, hospitals, pharmacies, etc.), and employers across the United States. There are two major components: the Household Component and the Insurance Component. The HC provides data from individual households, which is supplemented by data from their medical providers. During the household interviews, MEPS collects detailed information for each person in the household on demographic characteristics, health conditions, health status, use of medical services, charges and source of payments, access to care, satisfaction with care, health insurance coverage, income, and employment. The panel design of the survey, which features several rounds of interviewing covering two full calendar years, allows determining how changes in respondents' health status, income, employment, eligibility for public and private insurance coverage, use of services, and payment for care are related.
The Insurance Component is a separate survey of employers that provides data on employer-based health insurance.

Workshop Format

Day-1: Instructional overview of both data resources—MEPS in the morning, and HCUP in the afternoon. Participants have a choice of attending one or both Day-1 overviews.

- For HCUP Day-2 participants who are at an intermediate or advanced level in their use of HCUP databases and tools, participation in the Day-1 HCUP overview session is optional.
- For MEPS Day-2 participants, it is mandatory to attend the Day-1 MEPS overview in the morning. Please see registration form for exceptions.

Day-2: Simultaneous, hands-on technical training of both AHRQ resources. On the registration form, registrants must select either the HCUP or MEPS Day-2 training.

Who should attend?

This workshop is designed for health services researchers and analysts who are interested in learning about either or both of AHRQ-sponsored health care resources, HCUP and MEPS. Individuals interested in national, regional, State, and/or local health care analyses or clinical research would benefit from this workshop. Given the nature and pace of this course, attendees selecting hands-on training in HCUP should have some prior familiarity with health care administrative data and SAS. Attendees selecting hands-on training in MEPS should have some prior exposure to MEPS and be able to read SAS output.

Program description and requirements for HCUP

Attendees should review the on-line HCUP overview course prior to the workshop (www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/overviewcourse.jsp). This interactive, modular course provides an overview of the HCUP data, software tools, and related products.

Day-1: Orientation to the HCUP databases and related products, including HCUPnet. This orientation will provide an overview of the six main HCUP databases, including the newest database, the Nationwide Emergency Department Sample (NEDS). Information on related software tools and research products will also be presented—including a demonstration of HCUPnet, a free on-line querying tool that provides instant access to HCUP data.

Day-2: Hands-on exposure to HCUP data by applying research methods to produce meaningful, accurate health care information. This workshop will provide participants with hands-on experience with several HCUP databases and related tools. Attendees will use computers loaded with subsets of national HCUP databases, e.g., the Nationwide Inpatient Sample (NIS) and the new Nationwide Emergency Department Sample (NEDS). Faculty will provide instruction on working with these databases to produce national and health care estimates. This workshop will cover the basics of loading the data to more advanced examples of weighting the data and calculating variance estimates. The course will conclude with information on applying the AHRQ Quality Indicators to HCUP data. Faculty will be available to consult with attendees on how HCUP data can support their research interests.

For those selecting HCUP on Day-2:
The Day-2 HCUP hands-on training will offer intermediate level instruction on the use of HCUP databases and software tools to generate national, regional, state, and local level health care estimates. Attendees will access computers loaded with subsets of national and/or state HCUP databases. Attendees will have the opportunity to run SAS programs on the HCUP databases. All SAS programs will be provided.

Program description and requirements for MEPS

The MEPS Workbook provides concise information about the HC survey design and file content. It may be helpful to participants to read the MEPS Workbook (available on www.meps.ahrq.gov/workshop.htm) prior to attending the workshop. The main purpose of the hands-on portion (on Day-2) of the workshop is to provide participants an opportunity to construct analytic files, or ask specific questions about data files. In order to maximize the time available for file construction using the MEPS, it will be helpful to participants if they review the MEPS data file documentation and codebooks (also available on the MEPS Web site) prior to the workshop. If participants are already working with MEPS data, they are advised to bring any files or data they have put together, with them on removable media. All exercises on day two will be in SAS. It would be helpful to know how to read SAS output. Other programs (SPSS, STATA & SUDAAN) will be available on the laptop.

Day-1: Orientation to the MEPS medical expenditures and conditions data products. This orientation will consist of lectures on practical information about the database construction, survey design, file content, and the construction of analytic files by data users and the knowledge necessary to formulate research plans utilizing the various MEPS-HC files and linkage capabilities. Instructional and reference materials will be distributed and discussed as necessary.

Day-2: Hands-on training. This part of the workshop is dedicated to hands-on manipulation of MEPS data, including file construction, generating estimates, or/and finding answers to their own questions regarding health care expenditures and utilization. All 2006 full-year public use data files will be available on each participant's laptop. (Please note that non-public use MEPS data will not be available at the workshop.) The MEPS survey instrument will also be available electronically. Participants, who prefer hard copies of these materials, can download them from the MEPS Web site and bring them to the workshop. Some exercises will be available for better understanding of the MEPS data. Those participants who are already working with MEPS data for their research projects are encouraged to bring their analytical files in order to receive help from workshop staff. AHRQ Staff will be on site to answer questions and provide programming assistance.

For those selecting MEPS on Day-2:
The Day-2 MEPS Hands-on training will offer hands-on training on how to understand the variable structure, codebook, variable selection, SAS exercises and answers and assistance to individual data analysis questions. Researchers already working with MEPS data are encouraged to bring their research questions and/or their analytical files on removable media.

Workshop Location:

The workshop will be held at the AHRQ Conference Center in the Eisenberg Building, located at 540 Gaither Road in Rockville, Maryland. The workshop can accommodate a maximum of 60 participants. Based on past experience, the workshop fills quickly, so early registration is advised.

Registration Fee: No charge

Registration Process:

Please complete the registration form on pages 6 and 7 of this document. E-mail, fax or mail the form as directed. The workshop can accommodate a maximum of 60 participants (30 each for HCUP and MEPS). Registrants will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Notification of whether you are registered or waitlisted for this course will be sent to you via e-mail.

There will be NO on-site registration.

Note: *AHRQ is offering this workshop free of charge to participants. Please be considerate and do not reserve a space unless you actually plan to attend.*

Registration Deadline: September 15, 2009 (until the maximum number is reached)

Contact information:

For HCUP program questions, e-mail hcup@ahrq.gov or call 1-866-290-HCUP (4287).
For MEPS program questions, e-mail workshopinfo@ahrq.gov.
To request any special accessibility requirements (sign interpretation, wheelchair ramp access, etc.), e-mail workshopinfo@ahrq.gov.

MEPS+HCUP DATA USERS' WORKSHOP
TWO-DAY COMPUTER HANDS-ON

AHRQ CONFERENCE CENTER
Rockville, MD
SEPTEMBER 28-29, 2009

Workshop At-A-Glance:

Day-1: Monday, September 28, 2009

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Registration check-in
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	Introduction and MEPS Lectures
12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Overview of HCUP

Day-2: Tuesday, September 29, 2009 (Agenda subject to change)

HCUP:

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Registration check-in
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Advanced Overview of HCUP databases and software tools
10:00 a.m. –12:00 noon	Hands-on with the national HCUP Databases
12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Hands-on with the State HCUP Databases
2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Break
2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Quality Indicator Demonstration
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Consultation with Experts on Registrant Research Topics

MEPS:

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Registration check-in
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Introduction to MEPS Data Tools
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	SAS Exercises
11:00 a.m. –12:00 noon	Hands-on Computer Lab
12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Hands-on Computer Lab

Registration fee: **No charge**

Complimentary refreshments and beverages will be available on both days.

Registration deadline: **September 15, 2009** (or when the maximum number is reached)

Please e-mail, fax, or mail completed registration form (both pages), to:

Diana Brown
Social & Scientific Systems, Inc.
Support Contractor to the AHRQ
8757 Georgia Avenue, 12th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Telephone: 301-628-3118
Fax: 301-628-3101
E-mail: dbrown@s-3.com

*Please **print** or type the information directly into this form.*

Name: _____

Last, first, middle initial (include degrees for printed list of participants)

Title: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Please indicate any special requirements (e.g., accommodation for impaired mobility, sign language interpretation):

_____

How did you first learn about this workshop?

HCUP website

HCUP mailing list e-mail

MEPS website

MEPS mailing list e-mail

AHRQ newsletter

friend or colleague

informed via HCUP or MEPS technical assistance (specify HCUP   or MEPS   )

mentioned at a conference (please specify which_____)

attended previous HCUP or MEPS Workshop

Other (please specify _____)

Registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis with a maximum of 60 participants. Please make your Day-1 and -2 selections carefully on the next page. An incomplete form would result in delay in confirmation. Registration confirmation will be sent via e-mail within 2 business days. Your registration is not confirmed until you receive the confirmation notification. There is NO on-site registration.

AHRQ is offering this workshop free of charge to participants. Please be considerate and do not reserve a space unless you actually plan to attend. If plans change after the registration, please notify us as soon as possible, so the space can be offered to someone else.

In order to accommodate the needs of all workshop participants, please provide the following information. Please select **one** of the 4 choices for Day 1 and **one** of the two choices for Day 2 below:

Day-1 (September 28):

1) MEPS (AM) and HCUP (PM)

2) Arrive in the afternoon and attend HCUP (PM) only

3) Attend MEPS in the morning and leave for the day

4) I don't want to attend 1st day of the workshop. **

** - Attending MEPS Day-1 is mandatory for attending MEPS hands-on on 2nd day. Exceptions will only be made due to observance of a religious holiday or if you have attended MEPS lecture only workshop during an annual meeting or conference, e.g., APHA, ASA, GSA etc. Please indicate the reason for the exception below:

Name and Place of the conference where you have attended MEPS lecture only workshop.

_____

Religious Holiday _____

Day-2 (September 29):
1) HCUP Hands-on
2) MEPS Hands-on

1. Please indicate your familiarity with the following (check all that apply):

   SAS: SPSS: STATA: SUDAAN:
   (All the statistical packages will be available for the MEPS hands-on workshop. MEPS exercises will be explained in SAS. SAS will be used for the HCUP hands-on workshop.)

2. If attending Day-2 HCUP, indicate your familiarity and experience using HCUP databases:

   A lot of experience working with HCUP databases and tools:
   Moderate experience working with HCUP databases and tools:
   Little or no experience with HCUP but experience with large databases: *
   Little or no experience with HCUP or with large databases: *

   * Attendance of Day-1 HCUP overview and completion of 90 minute online HCUP Overview Course (www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/overviewcourse.jsp) are highly recommended.

3. We want to have the appropriate staff available for your questions. Please describe, in some detail, your research and/or analytic interests in using MEPS data or HCUP data (depending on your Day-2 training selection):

_____

_____

_____

_____ 7

WORKSHOP LOGISTICAL FACTSHEET

**Please print or save a copy of this factsheet as this document will
be removed from the website after registration is closed.**

Location:	AHRQ Conference Center 540 Gaither Road, Rockville, MD 20850-6649 Telephone: 301-427-1406 Fax: 301-427-1276 **For security purposes, please be prepared to show a photo ID to enter the AHRQ facility. Plan to arrive a few minutes early to pass through security.** **Participants are responsible for their own travel arrangements, hotel accommodations, and meals.** Beverages and light refreshments will be provided. There is a break room at AHRQ with vending machines. Directions to places for lunch either within walking distance or via the AHRQ shuttle will be available at the registration desk. For further details on AHRQ building location and map, please visit: http://www.ahrq.gov/about/map.htm.
Hotel Accommodations:	There are many hotels within a 1-mile radius of the AHRQ building that can be found by searching on the Internet. Some local hotels offer shuttle service to the nearby Shady Grove Metro station and may also offer shuttle service from your hotel to AHRQ. Confirm shuttle arrangements when making hotel reservations.
Ground Transportation:	If you take **METRO** (the subway system for the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area), the free AHRQ shuttle leaves from the Shady Grove station during the morning at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour starting at 6:45 a.m. and will bring you directly to the AHRQ building. To reach the ARHQ shuttle, turn **left** after exiting the Metro fare gates at the Shady Grove station, go up the escalator—the shuttle will park to your immediate right. If you take Metrobus instead of the AHRQ shuttle, take the route 63 or 66 bus from the Shady Grove station. The AHRQ building is located across the parking lot from the Market Place store at the corner of Redland and Gaither Roads. If you drive, **pay parking** is available at the AHRQ building. The lot is accessible only through the entrance on Gaither Road. Maximum daily cost is $4.
Driving Directions:	**From Baltimore:** Take I-95 South to I-495 West. Then follow directions from Prince Georges County. **From Prince Georges County:** Take I-495 West (toward Bethesda) to the I-270 North exit. Take I-270 North to Shady Grove Road East (Exit 8) and immediately bear right to Redland Blvd. Continue on Redland Blvd to the second traffic light. Turn right on Gaither Road. Enter the Redland Center parking lot which is the 2nd driveway on the right. **From Virginia and South:** Take I-495 North to the I-270 North exit. Take I-270 North to Shady Grove Road East (Exit 8), and immediately bear right to Redland Blvd. Continue on Redland Blvd to the second traffic light. Turn right on Gaither Road. Enter the Redland Center parking lot which is the 2nd driveway on the right. **From Route 355 North (Rockville Pike):** Turn left on Redland Blvd and turn left at the intersection of Redland Blvd and Gaither Road. From Gaither Road, enter the Redland Center parking lot which is the 2nd driveway on the right.

From Route 355 South (Rockville Pike): Turn right on Redland Blvd and turn left at the intersection of Redland Blvd and Gaither Road. From Gaither Road, enter the Redland Center parking lot which is the 2nd driveway on the right.

From Frederick County: Take I-270 South to Shady Grove Road East (Exit 8). Travel east about .6 miles and turn right on Gaither Road. Travel south and cross Redland Blvd. From Gaither Road, turn right into the Redland Center parking lot.

From Hubert H. Humphrey Building: Go West on Independence Avenue SW (toward Washington Avenue SW). Turn left onto ramp. Stay straight to 9th Street SW. Take I-395 South ramp (toward Virginia) and merge onto I-395 (toward Richmond). Take George Washington Memorial Parkway North (Exit 10C, toward Arlington Cemetery). Take I-495 North (toward Maryland). Follow directions from Virginia and South.

Shuttle/Taxi Services from Airports:	From **Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA), Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD),** and **Baltimore Washington Thurgood Marshall International Airport (BWI)**:

- **SuperShuttle** 1-800-BLUE VAN (1-800-258-3826): Reservations should be made **in advance**.

- **The Airport Shuttle** 1-800-776-0323 or 410-381-2772: Reservations should be made **in advance.**

- **Taxicab**: Taxis are readily available outside the baggage claim areas of all local airports.

A direct trip from any of the three airports takes approximately 1 hour depending on traffic. Allow slightly more time to/from BWI and slightly less to/from DCA.

Metro Subway Services:	Metro farecards are magnetic cards purchased from machines located at the entrance to each station. The fares between stations are listed at the station entrance. Farecards can be purchased for any amount of money up to $20.

From **Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA):** Board the Metro **Yellow Line** going toward the *Mount Vernon Square – 7th St-Convention Center* station. Transfer at the *Gallery Place-Chinatown* station to the **Red Line** going toward *Shady Grove.* Exit at the *Shady Grove* station. Travel time is approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes.

From **Union Station/Amtrak:** Board the Metro **Red Line** toward *Shady Grove* and exit at the *Shady Grove* station. Travel time is approximately 50 minutes.

Once at the Shady Grove station, follow the directions provided in the Ground Transportation section above for free AHRQ shuttle service directions to the AHRQ Eisenberg Office Building.

An interactive map of the Metro subway system that allows you to click on any station name for information about that station is available on the Web at http://www.wmata.com/rail/maps/.map.cfm.