



HERC

Resource Center

Director: Paul G. Barnett, PhD, ,

Executive Summary for Fiscal Year 2011

The mission of the HSR&D Health Economics Resource Center (HERC) is to increase the quality of VA health economics research and cost-effectiveness studies. HERC provides courses on health economics and econometrics, Cyber Seminars, and consulting services. It estimates the cost of all VA health care encounters, creates databases from DSS cost data, develops and maintains guidebooks to VA financial and health services cost data, issues technical reports with analyses of economic data, issues a bulletin to provide news to customers, and maintains a list of economists interested in collaborating on VA studies. The expertise of HERC economists is developed in their participation in economic studies funded by VA HSR&D, the QUERI program, the Cooperative Studies Program, the National Institutes of Health, and others.

HERC plans to undertake the following activities in FY12:

- Customer support

HERC will offer its course on cost-effectiveness analysis in fall 2011. It will coordinate monthly Cyber Seminars. HERC will publish the VA Health Economics Bulletin quarterly and provide consulting services to answers researchers' questions.

- Data bases and documentation

HERC will create a database with cost estimates of all hospital stays and outpatient encounters provided by VA in FY11 and update the guides to these data. HERC will update its annual patient-level cost database.

- DSS products

HERC will update its databases of DSS inpatient costs and facility level costs. It will revise its guide to DSS National Data Extracts.

- QUERI

With the support of supplemental funding from QUERI, HERC will assist with the design of economic evaluations of QUERI, contribute to QUERI reviews, and facilitate online meetings of QUERI economic researchers.

- Databases supplement

With the support of supplemental funding for databases, HERC will update its facility-level wage index file, which characterizes the geographic variation in prevailing health care wages. HERC will create two databases with information on the cost of VA contract care. These include an encounter-level dataset and a person-level annual cost dataset.

- Strategic planning

HERC will combine the results of its customer needs assessment survey with input from its steering committee to develop a strategic plan for the next 5 years.