



Data Issues Brief

About the DIB

The *Data Issues Brief (DIB)* is VIReC's monthly publication that informs VA researchers on current news or updates regarding health data, databases, and medical informatics.

Data & Information Systems

Ann Arbor SSN=IEN Crosswalk File Now Available

In 2009, it was discovered that some VistA sites had modified their VistA systems to be able to enter a provider's Social Security Number (SSN) as part of the provider identification number, the Internal Entry Number (IEN). The IEN is an individual's identification number in his/her local VistA system. In the MedSAS datasets, IEN is combined with the 3-digit STA3N (parent station identifier) to form the variables PROVID1 through PROVID10, reflecting the first through tenth healthcare providers associated with an event.

Ann Arbor's VistA system was at one time modified as mentioned above. As of November 2011, all Ann Arbor records where SSN=IEN were corrected in VistA. Ann Arbor records where SSN=IEN were also corrected in SAS datasets for FY10, FY11 and FY12 and a crosswalk file is now available for analysts working with data from earlier years. The crosswalk file will have the naming convention MDPPRD.PRO.SAS.IENSSN, with the functional task code 110TT01. Access to the file will require approval for access to real SSNs. Work continues on identifying and correcting SSN=IEN instances at other sites.

DSO Conversion Guide Index

The Decision support Office (DSO) developed a *Conversion Guide Index* collating changes in DSS processing and structure (e.g., DSS Departments, DSS Identifiers) from 1997 forward. This Index organizes changes by year and topic and references the fiscal year *Technical Conversion Guideline* detailing the change. The *Technical Conversion Guidelines* provide instructions to DSS site teams regarding financial and data processing modifications for the coming fiscal year. Instructions often involve modifications in the structure and interpretation of data.

Visit the DSS Intranet site for more information.

In this Issue

Data & Information Systems

- *Ann Arbor SSN=IEN Crosswalk File Now Available*
- *DSO Conversion Guide Index*
- *VHA Vital Status File Update*

Education

- *VIReC Cyber Seminars*
- *HDWA's Data Quality Framework for a Real Time Data Warehouse Presentation Available*

Conferences & Calls for Abstracts

- *Call for Abstracts: 2012 SMDM Annual Meeting, Open until May 18*
- *2012 AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting*

HSRData-L Listserv

- *Recent Topics*

VIReC Tip of the Month

- *What are CAPRI and VistAWeb?*

VHA Vital Status File Update

The Office of Information and Analytics, National Data Systems (NDS) announced the logic used to identify Veterans in the Enrollment source file changed in February 2012. The new logic corresponds to the method implemented in fiscal year 2009 by the Office of the Assistant Deputy Undersecretary for Health (ADUSH) for Policy and Planning, which creates the ADUSH Enrollment Files.

As a result of this change, the number of identified Veteran SSNs in the February 2012 Vital Status File (VSF) update decreased. The VHA Vital Status Mini File (VSF Mini) is one of three files that comprise the VSF and contains Veterans records only. The VSF Mini now has 2,497 fewer records.

Data In Use	Logic Used to Indentify Veterans in Enrollment source file
Prior to 2/2012	If MATCH is equal to 'cost only' and the 1st bite of ELIG is equal to 'N', the record is a non-Veteran record.
2/2012 - Present	If PRIO1_8 is equal to 'blank', the record is a non-Veteran record.

Education

VIREC Cyber Seminars

Clinical Informatics Cyber Seminars

Date	May 15, 2012	12pm Eastern
Topic	Wireless monitoring of sleep apnea	
Presenter	Carl J. Stepnowsky, PhD, San Diego VA Medical Center	
Recently Archived	<i>A Novel Use of Electronic Health Record Data To Inform Patient and Clinician Treatment Choices</i>	

Database and Methods Cyber Seminar Series

Date	April 2, 2012	1pm Eastern
Title	<i>Applying Comorbidity Measures Using VA and Medicare Data</i>	
Presenter	Denise Hynes, PhD, MPH, RN, Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital	
Recently Archived	<i>Measuring Outpatient Pharmacy Use in the VA Using VA Pharmacy Data</i>	

Register for a seminar or access archived presentations on VIREC's website: www.virec.research.va.gov.

E-mail questions to VIREC's Cyber Seminar Coordinator, Margaret Browning, at Margaret.Browning@va.gov.

HDWA's Data Quality Framework for a Real Time Data Warehouse Presentation Available

The Healthcare Data Warehousing Association's (HDWA) January 26, 2012, conference call, "Data Quality Framework for a Real Time Data Warehouse," is available in PowerPoint.

Register and log in to the HDWA website to access this presentation: hdwa.org/register/?return%5furl=%2fhdwa%2fcalls%2finfo%2f.

Conferences & Calls for Abstracts

Call for Abstracts: 2012 SMDM Annual Meeting, Open until May 18

The Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM) will hold its Annual Meeting in Phoenix, AZ, October 17–20. The conference theme is “Designing Health Information Technology for Better Health Decisions.” The call for abstracts is open until May 18.

Visit the SMDM website for specific details regarding this event and the call for abstracts: www.smdm.org/index.shtml.

2012 AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting

The 2012 AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting (ARM) will be held in Orlando, FL, June 24–26. ARM brings together health services researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to address the critical challenges confronting the nation's health care delivery system.

Visit the AcademyHealth website for details regarding this event: www.academyhealth.org/events/content.cfm?ItemNumber=882&navItemNumber=529.

HSRData-L Listserv

Recent Topics

The HSRData-L Listserv is a forum for VA researchers and data users to exchange information, ideas, questions, and answers about VA data and informatics. March's subject lines included:

- MULTI Indicator - Med SAS Outpatient files
- CAPRI - VISTA and Scanned Documents

Join the Listserv
Visit VIREC's Intranet site to
subscribe to the listserv.

VIREC maintains the HSRData-L Listserv, which is available to researchers and data users with a “va.gov” e-mail address. Archived discussions are available on the HSRData-L Listserv Intranet site.



VIREC Tip of the Month

What are CAPRI and VistAWeb?

CAPRI (Compensation and Pension Record Interchange) and VistAWeb are portals providing VA researchers with IRB-approved studies national access to read-only individual electronic medical records (EMRs). Accessing the complete EMRs of patients from a nationally identified cohort, albeit accessing one patient at a time, enables researchers to collect detailed clinical information not available in any national dataset. The complete medical record includes all types of care received from all VA facilities utilized by the individual patient.

The Health Information Access Office Intranet site provides more information about these portals including special user access.

Researchers may also contact the VIREC HelpDesk (virec@va.gov) to learn more about these portals.

This newsletter is provided by the VA Information Resource Center (VIREC).

Subscriptions

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VA Information Resource Center

Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital

Routing mail code: 151V

5000 South 5th Avenue

Hines, IL 60141-5000

virec@va.gov

www.virec.research.va.gov

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