



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.

VIReC Updates

VIReC Study Examines Care for Dually Eligible Veterans

VIReC is pleased to announce the publication of "Service Utilization of Veterans Dually Eligible for VA and Medicare Fee-For-Service: 1999–2004" in *Medicare & Medicaid Research Review (MMRR)*. This peer-reviewed paper presents finding from VIReC's study that examined care system choices among Veterans dually-eligible for VA and Medicare Fee-For-Service following changes in VA eligibility policy.

Available from VIReC's VA/CMS Data for Research website:
www.virec.research.va.gov/VACMS/Publications/Overview.htm

Data & Information Systems

FY12 Q4 DCG Data Available at AITC

Fiscal year 2012 (FY12) quarter 4 (Q4) Diagnostic Code Group (DCG) data are now available on the Austin Information Technology Center (AITC) mainframe (RMTPRD.MED.DCG.RISK.SMART231.FY12).

VIReC's September 2010 *Data Issues Brief* provides additional information on DCG data:
www.virec.research.va.gov/DIB/2010/DIB-Sept-CY10-ER.pdf.

Contact Mei-Ling Shen (Mei-ling.shen@va.gov) at VSSC for more information about these data.

FY13 Person Class Code Updates in SAS Format Library

Person Class code updates for FY13 have been added to the VHA Person Class Taxonomy.

The PROV1-PROV10 provider type fields of the Medical SAS Outpatient Event and Inpatient Encounters Datasets contain the Person Class code assigned to the provider(s) for that encounter. Several Decision Support System National Data Extracts also contain Person Class codes in provider type fields.

National Data Systems (NDS) has updated the SAS format library. The Person Class Taxonomy spreadsheet on NPCD's Intranet site reflects this update.

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FY13 Q1 Changes to ICD-9-CM and HCPCS (Level II) Codes

Changes to ICD-9-CM and HCPCS (Level II) code lists on the Austin Information Technology Center (AITC) mainframe implemented in October include:

- (1) 2 new HCPCS codes
- (2) 27 revised ICD-9 descriptions

These updates will be reflected in ICD-9-CM and HCPCS code values in the Medical SAS and other datasets for encounters in FY13 Q1 going forward. The exact date will depend on when the software patch is installed in each VistA system.

The ICD-9 code system is locked down in preparation for VA's transition to ICD-10. No new codes will be added. However, minor updates to existing codes fixing text or status may be implemented. The ICD-10 transition date has been postponed to October 1, 2014.

Education

VIREC Cyber Seminars

Clinical Informatics Cyber Seminars

Date	December 18, 2012	12pm Eastern
Title	<i>Integrating Measurement Based Care into the VA Mental Health Workflow with COMMEND</i>	
Presenters	Steven E. Lindley, MD, PhD, and Dan Y. Wang, PhD, VA Palo Alto Health Care System	

Database and Methods Cyber Seminar Series

Date	January 7, 2013	1pm Eastern
Title	<i>Measuring Veterans Health Services Use in VA and Medicare (Part II)</i>	
Presenter	Denise M. Hynes, MPH, PhD, RN, Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital	

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

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

Conferences & Calls for Abstracts

Health Services Research Call for Papers on HIT

Health Services Research (HSR) and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology are partnering to publish a special issue on health information technology (HIT). The issue will feature papers that demonstrate trends in adoption and meaningful use of HIT and its role in enabling improvements in healthcare delivery and outcomes. The submissions deadline is December 28, 2012.

Visit HSR's website for more information: www.hsr.org/hsr/abouthsr/call-for-papers-special-issue.jsp.

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. Last month's subject lines included:

- Counts of hospitalizations by DRG
- Bed cube
- EDIS (Emergency Department Integration Software)

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

Requesting Cause of Death Data for VA research

The National Death Index (NDI) is the primary source of cause of death data. In the VA, there are three methods for requesting these data:

1. *SMITREC NDI Mortality Data Request*
VA's National Serious Mental Illness Treatment Resource and Evaluation Center (SMITREC) maintains cause of death data for VHA patients and can release these data to VA researchers. These data currently include deaths recorded in the NDI for those who received VHA inpatient or outpatient encounters from FY 1998 – FY 2009. Contact Linda Mobley, MS, SMITREC's IRB Coordinator (Linda.Mobley@VA.gov), for more information on requesting these data.
2. *VIREC VA/CMS Data Special Request Process*
Medicare-NDI linked data can be requested through VIREC's VA/CMS Data Special Request Process. These data include deaths of Medicare beneficiaries from 1999 – 2008. Research projects are responsible for the cost of obtaining these data. Visit VIREC's VA/CMS Data for Research website for details on requesting Medicare-NDI linked data: www.virec.research.va.gov/Index-VACMS.htm.
3. *NCHS NDI Data Application Process*
NDI data for all descendants are available directly through the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The cost is \$5 per descendent. Visit the National Death Index section of the NCHS website for details on requesting these data: www.cdc.gov/nchs/ndi.htm.

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

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