



# 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 Exhibit Booth at AMIA Annual Symposium

Staff will be available at the VIREC Exhibit Booth during exhibit hours to answer questions about VA databases and information systems. Researchers will have the opportunity to meet the folks behind VIREC's HelpDesk and to learn more about our products and services.

### DSS Historical Clinic Stop Codes, FY13 Update

*VIREC Decision Support System (DSS) Historical Clinic Stop Codes* now includes definition change dates. This document provides stop code changes current through October 1, 2012, and also contains activation and de-activation dates, restrictions and restriction dates, and name change dates.

Available on VIREC's website:

[www.virec.research.va.gov/Intro/Documentation-Index.htm](http://www.virec.research.va.gov/Intro/Documentation-Index.htm).

### FY11 Variable Frequencies

*VIREC Select Variable Frequencies* contain record level tabulations for select dataset variables. Tabulations are now available for the DSS Laboratory (LAB), Laboratory Results (LAR), Pharmacy (PHA), and Radiology (RAD) clinical National Data Extract (NDE) datasets from fiscal year (FY) 2004 – 2011.

*VIREC Patient-Level Frequencies* for VHA DSS NDEs now contain patient-level frequency counts for select variables in the following FY07 – 11 clinical NDEs:

- LAB: IPNUM (Intermediate product number); VISN
- LAR: DSSLARNO (DSS result ID); VISN
- PHA: VA\_CLASS (VA drug class); VISN
- RAD: RAD\_CPT (Radiology CPT code); VISN

Available on VIREC's website:

[www.virec.research.va.gov/Intro/Documentation-Index.htm](http://www.virec.research.va.gov/Intro/Documentation-Index.htm).

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## FY12 Historical Variable Attributes

VIREC Historical Variable Attributes comprise current and historical summary information (e.g., SAS variable name, description, type, length, and format) allowing for comparison of dataset variables across time. FY12 historical variable attributes are now available for the following datasets:

- Medical SAS: Inpatient, Outpatient, and Inpatient Encounters
- DSS clinical NDEs: LAB, LAR, PHA, RAD

Available on VIREC's website: [www.virec.research.va.gov/Intro/Documentation-Index.htm](http://www.virec.research.va.gov/Intro/Documentation-Index.htm).

## Data & Information Systems

### FY12 Medical SAS Datasets Closeout & Availability

FY12 Medical SAS inpatient and outpatient datasets with file names beginning with MDPPRD.MDP.SAS have been closed out and are now available for use on the Austin Information Technology Center (AITC) mainframe. Note: National Data Systems (NDS) periodically creates revised files allowing for the capture of data that would otherwise be lost due to submission after closeout. Revised files include the designation REVISED in the file name (e.g., Outpatient Event: MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.REVISED.SEyy).

A schedule of SAS file creation dates for FY2013 is available from the National Patient Care Database's Intranet site.

### FY13 Changes to DSS Identifiers

The Decision Support Office (DSO) released their FY13 changes to DSS Identifiers (also called stop codes). Clinic stop codes are used to indicate the workgroup or clinic responsible for specific services or production units for outpatient care. The *FY13 DSS Identifier Change List* contains information on new stop codes, changed names and/or definitions, changes in restriction type, and inactivated stop codes.

Available from DSS' Intranet site.

### SSN Changes to PTF Data May Appear in Medical SAS Datasets

Effective May 10, 2012, the following edits to Patient Treatment File (PTF) data transmitted to the AITC mainframe have been discontinued:

- Rejection of records with Social Security Numbers (SSNs) containing number 8 or 9 in the first position

Medical SAS files from May 2012 forward may include SSNs with an 8 or 9 in the first position, reflecting workload for newborns or probable, unlabeled tests patients. VIREC examined Medical SAS data in the FY12 third quarter Acute Care, Main file and found no records containing SSNs with an 8 or 9 in the first position.

### Data Transition to CDW Update

National Data Systems (NDS) is no longer approving new requests for access to DSS NDE data on the AITC mainframe. These data are accessible from the Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW).

Visit VIREC's website for more information on how to request access to CDW data: [www.virec.research.va.gov/CDW/Overview.htm](http://www.virec.research.va.gov/CDW/Overview.htm).

## New Compliance Date for ICD-10 Conversion, October 1, 2014

The compliance deadline for converting to the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Edition (ICD-10) system of diagnostic and procedural coding has been changed from October 1, 2013, to October 1, 2014.

## Education

### VIREC Cyber Seminars

#### Clinical Informatics Cyber Seminars

<b>Date</b>	November 20, 2012	12pm Eastern
<b>Title</b>	<i>VOOGLE: A Patient-Centered Data Retrieval and Visualization Program</i>	
<b>Presenters</b>	Augie Turano, PhD, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System David E. Eibling, MD, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System	

#### Database and Methods Cyber Seminar Series

<b>Date</b>	December 3, 2012	1pm Eastern
<b>Title</b>	<i>Measuring Veterans Health Services Use in VA and Medicare (Part 1)</i>	
<b>Presenter</b>	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](http://www.virec.research.va.gov/CyberSeminars/Overview.htm).

E-mail questions to VIREC's Cyber Seminar Coordinator, Margaret Browning, at [Margaret.Browning@va.gov](mailto:Margaret.Browning@va.gov).

### SEER-Medicare Training Now April 25–26, 2013

The date for National Cancer Institute's annual two day training course for SEER-Medicare data users has changed from November 15–16, 2012, to April 25–26, 2013. This free course will be held in Rockville, MD, and will also be video cast for those unable to attend in-person.

E-mail Elaine Yanisko at IMS ([yaniskoe@imsweb.com](mailto:yaniskoe@imsweb.com)) to be notified when registration for the course is open.

The "Items of Interest" box on the SEER-Medicare homepage will post additional information about the course as it becomes available: [healthservices.cancer.gov/seermedicare](http://healthservices.cancer.gov/seermedicare).

## Conferences & Calls for Abstracts

### AMIA Annual Symposium, November 3–7

The American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) Annual Symposium will be held November 3–7, 2012, in Chicago IL. The conference theme is *Informatics: Transforming Health and Healthcare*.

Visit AMIA's website to view the meeting events and register to attend: [www.amia.org/amia2012](http://www.amia.org/amia2012).

## 2013 AcademyHealth ARM Call for Abstracts, November 1

The 2013 AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting (ARM) call for abstracts opens November 1. AcademyHealth brings together health services researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to address the critical challenges confronting the nation's health care delivery system.

Visit AcademyHealth's website for updates regarding this meeting:  
[www.academyhealth.org/Events/content.cfm?ItemNumber=842&navItemNumber=1996](http://www.academyhealth.org/Events/content.cfm?ItemNumber=842&navItemNumber=1996).

## 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:

- VA Cancer Registry and data access
- Diagnosis list in medical SAS datasets is problem list or encounter list
- Metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas

**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

### Where Can I Find Information on VA's Transition to ICD-10?

VHA Health Information Management provides updates and pertinent information on VA's transition to ICD-10. Researchers and data users will find the following information on HIM's VA Intranet site:

- Links to general equivalence maps between ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes sets
- ICD-10-CM (diagnosis codes) and ICD-10-PCS (inpatient procedure codes) draft code sets
- Sample tools used for review/cleanup activities for encounter forms and clinical reminders
- Business Requirements Document Addendums

HIM also answers frequently asked questions, provides ICD-10 training, and more.

Available from the ICD-10 Project section of HIM's VA Intranet site.

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