



VA Information Resource Center
Data Issues Brief
March, 2001

1. VA Military Sexual Trauma Datasets Implemented

Two Military Sexual Trauma datasets have been developed and implemented, one capturing outpatient information [[MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.SEMLST01\(0\)](#)], the other capturing inpatient data [[MDPPRD.MDP.SAS.IPMLST01\(0\)](#)]. The file structures for the Military Sexual Trauma databases mirror the SE (outpatient) and PM (inpatient) files. VA researchers with appropriate clearance can access these SAS files on the AAC mainframe. If you need further information, contact the AAC Help Desk at [\(512\) 326-6780](#).

2. VA Outpatient Database Record Roll-Up Revised

The roll-up logic on the national SAS outpatient visit file (SF) has been changed to match the logic used on the SAS outpatient event file (SE). Each record in the SF file is now the unduplicated count of SSN / [STA5A](#) / VIZDAY, rather than SSN / [STA3N](#) / VIZDAY. The FY-98, FY-99, and FY-00 files have been reloaded using the new logic.

Because of the new roll-up procedure, the SF98 file now has a total of 34,405,205 observations, representing an increase of 987,918; SF99 has 36,375,335 observations, an increase of 1,139,387; and the SF00 has 37,686,913 observations, an increase of 1,338,877. The current fiscal year file, SF01, will be reloaded the weekend of March 10, 2001 during the scheduled processing. If you have any questions call Cyndi Cavalier, MDP Analyst, Austin Automation Center at [\(512\) 326-6728](#).

3. VA Ambulatory Care Data Collective To Meet

Over the next four months, the Ambulatory Care Data Collective (ACDC) will meet for a week each month to evaluate VA's ambulatory care data systems. The ACDC work team comprises of representatives from across all areas of expertise and interest (e.g., clinicians, administrators, researchers, IT, etc.) and - given the recognized differences in how the VISNs operate - representatives from across all VISNs.

Membership on the Collective is by invitation only. The ACDC work group has four major tasks: (1) to understand the vision for ambulatory care in VHA in the future; (2) to identify the core problems with the data; (3) to develop a VHA-wide strategy for an integrated, patient-focused ambulatory care data system; and (4) to construct a preliminary tactical plan for implementing the strategy across VHA. The first meeting is scheduled for March 19-23, 2001 in Washington, DC. Upon completion, the results will be presented to the VHA National Leadership Board during the week of July 16, 2001. The contact person for the Ambulatory Care Data Collective is Nicheole Amundsen, R.N., Clinical Program Manager, Office of Primary and Ambulatory Care, (202) 273-8553.

4. Source For Census 2000

The Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) has created a Web portal called "Census Watch" for individuals interested in the progress of Census 2000 releases. Census Watch is intended to provide immediate access to the most recent information on Census related data resources, redistricting, on-line GIS mapping, education and training, as well as news and articles. Visit the site at:
<http://www.esri.com/industries/localgov/censuswatch/index.html>

5. NCHS Releases New Data

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) announced a new release of data in the Data Warehouse on Trends in Health and Aging. These data can be found on the NCHS Web site at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/agingact.htm>.

The new release contains data from National Hospital Discharges Survey, 1970-1999 (average days of care, discharge rates by first listed diagnosis and all listed procedures), data from National Ambulatory Care Survey and Behavior Risk Factors Surveillance System, and national data on Medicare expenditures, 1974-1998.

For those investigators who use the Warehouse and would like to send comments to the NCHS about the data, your comments and suggestions can be sent via their Web site at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/otheract/aging/know.htm>.

Data Issues Briefs are developed by the staff of the VA Information Resource Center (VIREC) for the purpose of informing and updating VA researchers on current and pending happenings and changes regarding health data, databases, and medical informatics. *Data Issues Briefs* are produced on a monthly basis and are distributed through e-mail subscriptions. Previous releases are posted and available on the VIREC Web site at <http://www.virec.research.med.va.gov>. If you wish to receive future issues direct, please send an e-mail message to the VIREC at virec@research.hines.med.va.gov or call 708-202-2413. If you have any suggestions or comments about the *Data Issues Briefs*, please e-mail Diane C. Cowper, Editor, at cowper@research.hines.med.va.gov.