



Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Advancing Excellence in Health Care

www.ahrq.gov

Medical Expenditure Panel Survey

MEDICAL CONDITIONS FILE



Medical Conditions File

Medical Conditions File contains

- Household reported data
- Data on Conditions
- Data on Procedures



Sources of Data

Sources of data on Medical Conditions File

- Condition Enumeration
- Medical Events
- Disability Section



General File Structure

- Each record represents a unique condition or procedure reported by a household respondent
- Depending on the number of conditions reported, persons may be represented on the file
 - once
 - several times
 - not at all



Reporting and Recording Conditions

- Interviewer records verbatim text reported by the household respondent
 - Open-ended questions

Example:

We're interested in learning about health problems that may have bothered (PERSON) {since (START DATE)/between (START DATE) and (END DATE)}. Health problems include physical conditions, accidents, or injuries that affect any part of the body as well as mental or emotional health conditions, such as feeling sad, blue, or anxious about something.



Reporting and Recording Conditions

- Respondents may report having the same condition more than once
 - Interviewer verifies that these are different occurrences of the condition
 - each unique episode of a condition is recorded only once
 - person may have more than one cold in a year
 - each cold has a separate record



Priority Conditions

- Designation based on
 - Prevalence
 - Expense
 - Relevance to policy



Priority Conditions

- **Long-Term, Life Threatening Conditions:**

Cancer (of any body part)

Diabetes

Emphysema

High Cholesterol

HIV/AIDS

Hypertension

Ischemic Heart Disease

Stroke prevalence



Priority Conditions

- **Chronic, Manageable Conditions:**
 - Arthritis
 - Asthma
 - Gall Bladder Disease
 - Stomach Ulcers
 - Back Problems of Any Kind
- **Mental Health Issues:**
 - Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias
 - Depression and Anxiety Disorders



Priority Conditions

- **Specific Priority Condition Questions**
 - **Date condition began**
 - **Round-specific questions**
 - Was a doctor ever seen or talked to for the condition?
 - **Follow-Up Questions in Later Round**
 - Still being treated for this condition?
 - How seriously does condition affect overall health and well-being?
 - Did a provider recommend further treatment?



Accidents and Injuries

- **Ascertained at time of interview**
 - **date of accident**
 - **place (work, home, school, etc.)**
 - **cause (gun, vehicle, fall, fire, etc.)**
 - **whether or not the person has recovered from the injury**



Priority and Injury Conditions

■ Date Information

- If a condition is both a priority condition and an injury, date information is on the injury record.

■ Previous Year's Information

- Due to the overlapping panel design, some conditions may have been first reported in the previous year. Unless it was a Priority Condition or was linked to an event in 2004, it may not appear on 2004 data file.



Disability Flag Variables

- **Three Flag Variables**
 - **Missed work day (MISSWORK)**
 - **Missed school day (MISSSCHL)**
 - **Day spent in bed (INBEDFLG)**



Condition and Procedure Coding

■ Coding and Editing

- Fully specified ICD-9 CM codes (up to 5 digits)
- ICD-9 condition codes collapsed to 3 digits to maintain confidentiality
- Approximately 10% of condition codes are collapsed further by combining 2 or more 3-digit codes
- Procedure codes collapsed from fully specified (up to 4 digits) to 2-digit codes
- Approximately 3% of procedure codes are collapsed further by combining 2 or more 3-digit codes



Clinical Classification Codes

- Formerly Clinical Classification for Health Policy Research (CCHPR)
- ICD-9 codes aggregated into clinically meaningful categories
- Edited to preserve confidentiality



Utilization Variables

Following Utilization Variables are included in the Medical Conditions file:

- ERNUM
- HHNUM
- IPNUM
- OBNUM
- OPNUM
- RXNUM



Utilization Variables

- **Events for Multiple Conditions**
 - **Events may be associated with more than one condition**

 - **Example: One hospital stay for 3 conditions**
 - **Fractured hip, fractured shoulder, concussion**



Weighted Estimates

- **Medical Conditions file includes person-level weights**
 - Frequencies from this file will estimate the number of times a condition was reported by the sample population
 - Number of persons reporting a condition can only be estimated at the person level



Limitations of Condition Data

■ Limitations

- inaccurate or vague reports of condition
- clustering of ICD-9 codes in NEC (not elsewhere classified)
- one respondent provides information for the entire household



Merging/Linking to Other MEPS Files

■ ID Variables

- used to
 - identify and distinguish records on a file
 - match records in different files
- **DUPERSID** (person-level ID)
- **CONDIDX** (condition-level ID)
- **EVNTIDX** (event-level ID)
 - but note PMED differences (LINKIDX, RXRECIDX)
- **CLNKIDX** (condition-event link ID)



Two Sources of Priority Conditions

- **Two Sources of Priority Conditions in MEPS**
 - **Condition Enumeration –PC Designation**
 - **Priority Condition Supplement – Not on Medical Conditions File**