

**MEPS HC-033H:
1999 Home Health File**

May 2002

**Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
Center for Cost and Financing Studies**

Table of Contents

A.	Data Use Agreement.....	A-1
B.	Background.....	B-1
	1.0 Household Component	B-1
	2.0 Medical Provider Component.....	B-2
	3.0 Insurance Component	B-2
	4.0 Survey Management	B-3
C.	Technical and Programming Information.....	C-1
	1.0 General Information.....	C-1
	2.0 Data File Information.....	C-2
	2.1 Codebook Structure.....	C-4
	2.2 Reserved Codes	C-4
	2.3 Codebook Format	C-5
	2.4 Variable Naming	C-5
	2.4.1 General.....	C-5
	2.4.2 Expenditure and Sources of Payment Variables.....	C-5
	2.5 File Contents.....	C-6
	2.5.1 Survey Administration	C-6
	2.5.1.1 Person Identifiers (DUID, PID, DUPERSID).....	C-6
	2.5.1.2 Record Identifiers (EVENTIDX).....	C-6
	2.5.1.3 Round Indicators (EVENTRN, HHR2FLAG).....	C-6
	2.5.2 Characteristics of Home Health Events.....	C-7
	2.5.2.1 Date Home Health Event Started (HHBEGYR, HHBEGMM)	C-7
	2.5.2.2 Characteristics of Home Health Events (MPCELIG-OTHCWOS).....	C-7
	2.5.2.3 Treatments, Therapies and Services (HOSPITAL-OTHSVCOS).....	C-8
	2.5.2.4 Frequency of Home Health Events (FREQCY-HHDAYS)	C-8
	2.5.3 Condition and Procedure Codes and Clinical Classification Codes.....	C-8
	2.5.5 Expenditure Data.....	C-8
	2.5.5.1 Definition of Expenditures.....	C-8
	2.5.5.2 Data Editing/Imputation Methodologies of Expenditure Variables.....	C-9
	3.0 Sample Weight (PERWT99F).....	C-13
	3.1 Overview	C-13
	3.2 Details on Person Weights Construction.....	C-14
	3.2.1 MEPS Panel 3 Weight	C-14
	3.2.2 MEPS Panel 4 Weight	C-14
	3.2.3 The Final Weight for 1999.....	C-15
	3.2.4 Coverage.....	C-15
	4.0 Strategies for Estimation.....	C-15
	4.1 Variables with Missing Values	C-16
	4.2 Basic Estimates of Utilization, Expenditure and Sources of Payment	C-16
	4.3 Estimates of the Number of Persons with Home Health Events Due to a	

Hospitalization.....	C-17
4.4 Person-Based Ratio Estimates.....	C-18
4.4.1 Person-Based Ratio Estimates Relative to Persons with Home Health Events by Paid Independent Providers.....	C-18
4.4.2 Person-Based Ratio Estimates Relative to the Entire Population	C-18
4.5 Sampling Weights for Merging Previous Releases of MEPS Household Data with this Event File	C-19
4.6 Variance Estimation.....	C-19
5.0 Merging/Linking MEPS Data Files.....	C-20
5.1 Linking a 1999 Person-Level File to the 1999 Home Health Provider Event File	C-20
5.2 Linking the 1999 Home Health Provider Event File to the 1999 Medical Conditions File and/or the 1999 Prescribed Medicines File	C-21
5.3 Limitations/Caveats of RXLK (the 1999 Prescribed Medicine Link File)	C-21
5.4 Limitations/Caveats of CLNK (the 1999 Medical Conditions Link File).....	C-21
References.....	C-22
Attachment 1	C-A1-1
D. Variable-Source Crosswalk.....	D-1

A. Data Use Agreement

Individual identifiers have been removed from the microdata contained in the files on this CD-ROM. Nevertheless, under sections 308 (d) and 903 (c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 242m and 42 U.S.C. 299 a-1), data collected by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and/or the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) may not be used for any purpose other than for the purpose for which they were supplied; any effort to determine the identity of any reported cases is prohibited by law.

Therefore, in accordance with the above referenced Federal statute, it is understood that:

1. No one is to use the data in this data set in any way except for statistical reporting and analysis.
2. If the identity of any person or establishment should be discovered inadvertently, then (a) no use will be made of this knowledge, (b) the Director, Office of Management, AHRQ will be advised of this incident, (c) the information that would identify any individual or establishment will be safeguarded or destroyed, as requested by AHRQ, and (d) no one else will be informed of the discovered identity.
3. No one will attempt to link this data set with individually identifiable records from any data sets other than the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey or the National Health Interview Survey.

By using these data you signify your agreement to comply with the above-stated statutorily based requirements, with the knowledge that deliberately making a false statement in any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the Federal Government violates 18 U.S.C. 1001 and is punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 or up to 5 years in prison.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality requests that users cite AHRQ and the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey as the data source in any publications or research based upon these data.

B. Background

This documentation describes one in a series of public use files from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS). The survey provides a new and extensive data set on the use of health services and health care in the United States.

MEPS is conducted to provide nationally representative estimates of health care use, expenditures, sources of payment, and insurance coverage for the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population. MEPS is cosponsored by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS).

MEPS is a family of three surveys. The Household Component (HC) is the core survey and forms the basis for the Medical Provider Component (MPC) and part of the Insurance Component (IC). Together these surveys yield comprehensive data that provide national estimates of the level and distribution of health care use and expenditures, support health services research, and can be used to assess health care policy implications.

MEPS is the third in a series of national probability surveys conducted by AHRQ on the financing and use of medical care in the United States. The National Medical Care Expenditure Survey (NMCES) was conducted in 1977, and the National Medical Expenditure Survey (NMES) was conducted in 1987. Since 1996, MEPS has continued this series with design enhancements and efficiencies that provide a more current data resource to capture the changing dynamics of the health care delivery and insurance system.

The design efficiencies incorporated into MEPS are in accordance with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Survey Integration Plan of June 1995, which focused on consolidating DHHS surveys, achieving cost efficiencies, reducing respondent burden, and enhancing analytical capacities. To advance these goals, MEPS includes linkage with the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)—a survey conducted by NCHS from which the sample for the MEPS HC is drawn—and enhanced longitudinal data collection for core survey components. The MEPS HC augments NHIS by selecting a sample of NHIS respondents, collecting additional data on their health care expenditures, and linking these data with additional information collected from the respondents' medical providers, employers, and insurance providers.

1.0 Household Component

The MEPS HC, a nationally representative survey of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population, collects medical expenditure data at both the person and household levels. The HC collects detailed data on demographic characteristics, health conditions, health status, use of medical care services, charges and payments, access to care, satisfaction with care, health insurance coverage, income, and employment.

The HC uses an overlapping panel design in which data are collected through a preliminary contact followed by a series of five rounds of interviews over a 2½-year period. Using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) technology, data on medical expenditures and use for 2 calendar

years are collected from each household. This series of data collection rounds is launched each subsequent year on a new sample of households to provide overlapping panels of survey data and, when combined with other ongoing panels, will provide continuous and current estimates of health care expenditures.

The sampling frame for the MEPS HC is drawn from respondents to NHIS. NHIS provides a nationally representative sample of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population, with oversampling of Hispanics and blacks.

2.0 Medical Provider Component

The MEPS MPC supplements and/or replaces information on medical care events reported in the MEPS HC by contacting medical providers and pharmacies identified by household respondents. The MPC sample includes all home health agencies and pharmacies reported by HC respondents. Office-based physicians, hospitals, and hospital physicians are also included in the MPC but may be subsampled at various rates, depending on burden and resources, in certain years.

Data are collected on medical and financial characteristics of medical and pharmacy events reported by HC respondents. The MPC is conducted through telephone interviews and record abstraction.

3.0 Insurance Component

The MEPS IC collects data on health insurance plans obtained through private and public-sector employers. Data obtained in the IC include the number and types of private insurance plans offered, benefits associated with these plans, premiums, contributions by employers and employees, and employer characteristics.

Establishments participating in the MEPS IC are selected through three sampling frames:

- A list of employers or other insurance providers identified by MEPS HC respondents who report having private health insurance at the Round 1 interview.
- A Bureau of the Census list frame of private-sector business establishments.
- The Census of Governments from the Bureau of the Census.

To provide an integrated picture of health insurance, data collected from the first sampling frame (employers and other insurance providers identified by MEPS HC respondents) are linked back to data provided by those respondents. Data collected from the two Census Bureau sampling frames are used to produce annual national and State estimates of the supply and cost of private health insurance available to American workers and to evaluate policy issues pertaining to health insurance. National estimates of employer contributions to group health insurance from the MEPS IC are used in the computation of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

The MEPS IC is an annual panel survey. Data are collected from the selected organizations

through a prescreening telephone interview, a mailed questionnaire, and a telephone followup for nonrespondents.

4.0 Survey Management

MEPS data are collected under the authority of the Public Health Service Act. They are edited and published in accordance with the confidentiality provisions of this act and the Privacy Act. NCHS provides consultation and technical assistance.

As soon as data collection and editing are completed, the MEPS survey data are released to the public in staged releases of summary reports, microdata files, and compendiums of tables. Data are also released through MEPSnet, an online interactive tool developed to give users the ability to statistically analyze MEPS data in real time. Summary reports and compendiums of tables are released as printed documents and electronic files. Microdata files are released on CD-ROM and/or as electronic files.

Printed documents and selected public use file data on CD-ROMs are available through the AHRQ Publications Clearinghouse. Write or call:

AHRQ Publications Clearinghouse
Attn: (publication number)
P.O. Box 8547
Silver Spring, MD 20907
800-358-9295
410-381-3150 (callers outside the United States only)
888-586-6340 (toll-free TDD service; hearing impaired only)

Be sure to specify the AHRQ number of the document or CD-ROM you are requesting. Selected electronic files are available through the Internet on the MEPS Web site:

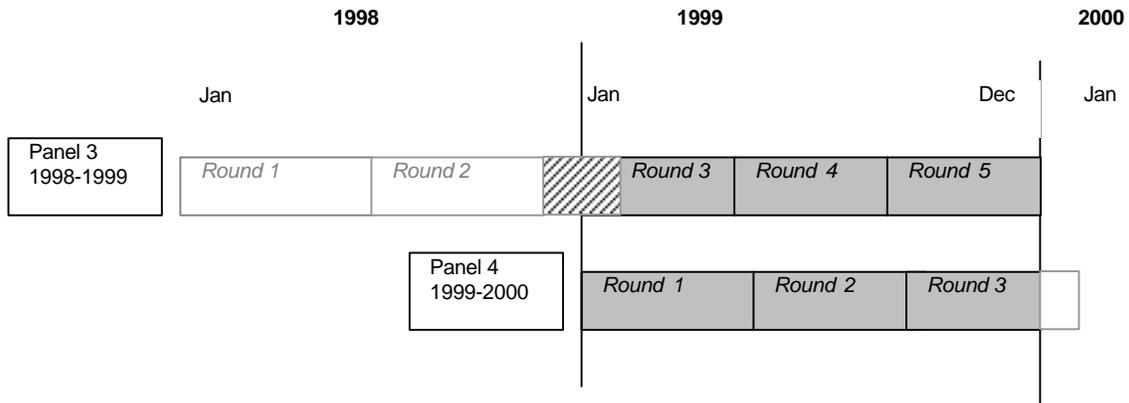
<http://www.meps.ahrq.gov/>

Additional information on MEPS is available from the MEPS project manager or the MEPS public use data manager at the Center for Cost and Financing Studies, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

C. Technical and Programming Information

1.0 General Information

This documentation describes one in a series of public use event files from the 1999 Medical Expenditure Panel Survey Household Component (HC) and Medical Provider Component (MPC). Released as an ASCII data file and SAS transport file, this public use file provides detailed information on home health events for a nationally representative sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States and can be used to make estimates of home health utilization and expenditures for calendar year 1999. As illustrated below, this file consists of MEPS survey data obtained in the 1999 portion of Round 3 (and Round 2 for some cases, see HHR2FLAG), and Round 4 and 5 for Panel 3, as well as Rounds 1, 2, and the 1999 portion of Round 3 for Panel 4 of the MEPS HC (i.e., the rounds for the MEPS panels covering calendar year 1999).



 **NOTE:** Typically for MEPS panels, MEPS Round 2 data collection ends in the first year of a panel and Round 3 data collection begins in the first year of the panel and crosses the year boundary into the second year of the panel. The crosshatched area in the above figure signifies that Round 2 data collection for approximately one quarter of the Panel 3 households began in 1998, the first year of the panel, but ended in 1999. For those households, all of the Round 3 data collection occurred in 1999. For the other three quarters of Panel 3 households, Round 2 data collection followed the typical pattern and began and ended in 1998. For those households, Panel 3 Round 3 data collection took place during both the first and second years of the panel, as is typically done for Round 3.

Counts (utilization) of home health events are based entirely on household reports. Agency home health providers were sampled into the MEPS MPC (see Section B. 2.0). Only those providers for whom the respondent signed a permission form were included in MPC. Information from MPC was used to supplement expenditure and payment data reported by the household.

Data from this event file can be merged with other 1999 MEPS HC data files for purposes of appending person characteristics, such as demographic or health insurance coverage to each home health record.

This file can be also used to construct summary variables of expenditures, sources of payment, and related aspects of home health events for calendar year 1999. Aggregate annual person-level

information on the use of home health providers and other health services use is provided on the 1999 Population Characteristics file, where each record represents a MEPS sampled person.

The following documentation offers a brief overview of the data provided, and the content and structure of the file and the codebook. It contains the following sections:

- Data File Information
- Sample Weights
- Merging MEPS Data Files
- References
- Variable to Source Crosswalk

For more information on MEPS HC survey design see S. Cohen, 1997; J. Cohen, 1997; and S. Cohen, 1996. For information on the MEPS MPC design, see S. Cohen, 1998. A copy of the survey instruments used to collect the information on this file is available on the MEPS web site at the following address: <<http://www.meps.ahrq.gov>>.

2.0 Data File Information

The 1999 home health public use data set consists of one event level data file. The file contains characteristics associated with the home health event and imputed expenditure data. For users wanting to impute expenditures, pre-imputed data are available through the CCFS data center. Please visit the CCFS data center website for details:

<<http://www.meps.ahrq.gov/>>. The data user/analyst is forewarned that the imputation of expenditures will necessitate a sizable commitment of resources: financial; staff; and time.

This public use data set contains characteristics associated with the home health event and imputed expenditure data. Each record represents a household-reported home health event. A home health event is a MONTH of similar service provided by the same PROVIDER -- a month of home health services from a single provider entity (i.e., paid independent, informal or agency). For example, if a person received 4 events from a nurse, 10 events from a homemaker and 4 events from a physical therapist all from the same provider every month for 3 months, then there will be 3 event records on the file, one for each month (NOT 54 records). Data were collected in this manner because agencies, hospitals, and nursing homes provide expenditure data in this manner. In order to be consistent with the definition of what is considered a home health event on this file, this same definition (i.e., a month of similar services) was applied to all types of providers.

This public use data set contains 3,073 home health records. Of the 3,073 records, 3,046 are associated with persons having a positive person-level weight (PERWT99F). It includes all records related to home health events for all household survey respondents who resided in eligible responding households and reported at least one home health event. Each record represents one household-reported home health event that occurred during calendar year 1999. Some household respondents may have multiple events and thus will be represented in multiple records on the file. Other household respondents may have reported no events and thus will have no records on this file. These data were

collected during the 1999 portion of Round 3 (Round 2 for some cases, see HHR2FLAG), and Rounds 4 and 5 for Panel 3, as well as Rounds 1, 2, and the 1999 portion of Round 3 for Panel 4 of the MEPS HC. The persons represented on this file had to meet either (a) or (b):

(a) Be classified as a key in-scope person who responded for his or her entire period of 1999 eligibility (i.e., persons with a positive 1999 full-year person-level sampling weight (PERWT99F>0)), or

(b) Be classified as either an eligible non-key person or an eligible out-of-scope person who responded for his or her entire period of 1999 eligibility, and belonged to a family (i.e., all persons with the same value for FAMID) in which all eligible family members responded for their entire period of 1999 eligibility, and at least one family member has a positive 1999 full-year person weight (i.e., eligible non-key or eligible out-of-scope persons who are members of a family all of whose members have a positive 1999 full-year MEPS family-level weight (WTFAM99>0)).

Please refer to Attachment 1 for definitions of key, non-key, in-scope and eligible. Persons with no home health events for 1999 are not included on this file but are represented on the 1999 MEPS person-level files. A codebook for the data file is provided (in file H33HCB.PDF).

Home health providers include formal or paid, and informal or unpaid providers. Formal or paid providers include: home health agency, hospital, or nursing home, and other independent paid providers. Informal or unpaid providers include family and friends.

For home health agencies, hospitals, and nursing homes, it is important to distinguish between the provider and the home health worker. In these cases, the provider is the agency or the facility that employs the workers. The home health workers are the people who administer the care. Examples of home health care workers are the following: nurses, physical therapists, home health aides, homemakers, and hospice workers, among others. These examples are generally the types of workers associated with agencies, hospitals, and nursing homes. Paid independent providers generally include companions, nursing assistants, physicians, etc. For each record on this file, one or more types of workers can be reported. The respondent is asked to mention all of the types of home health workers whom provided home health care (since records represent a month of service, there can be more than one type of worker on a single record). For example, an agency that provides two types of aides that provide home health care to the same person during a specific month is represented as one event on the file (even though two workers employed at the same agency provided care) -- when using this file analysts must keep in mind that a record on the file corresponds to a provider entity not an individual or particular worker.

Expenditure data for home health agency events are collected exclusively in the MPC. Expenditure data for other paid independent home health care events are collected from the household, since these types of events are not included in the MPC. Friends, family and volunteers providing home health care to a person are considered unpaid and are not included in the MPC (no expenditure information is available for them).

Each home health record also includes the following: date the provider started seeing the respondent; type of provider; types of services provided and if this was a repeat event; if care was received due to hospitalization; whether or not a person was taught how to use medical equipment; imputed sources of payment, total payment and total charge for the home health event expenditure; and a full-year person-level weight.

Data from this file can be merged with previously released 1999 MEPS HC person-level data using the unique person identifier, DUPERSID, to append person-level characteristics such as demographic or health insurance coverage to each record. The 1999 home health event file can also be linked to the MEPS 1999 Medical Conditions File and the MEPS 1999 Prescribed Medicines File. Please see Section 5.0 and the 1999 Appendix File for details on how to link MEPS data files.

Panel 3 cases (PANEL99=3 on the 1999 person-level file) can be linked back to the 1999 MEPS HC Public Use Data Files. However, the user should be aware, at this time, no weight is being provided to facilitate 2-year analysis of Panel 3 data.

2.1 Codebook Structure

For each variable on the file, both weighted and unweighted frequencies are provided in the codebook (file H33HCB.PDF). The codebook and data file sequence list variables in the following order:

- Unique person identifiers
- Unique home health event identifier
- Other survey administration variables
- Home health characteristic variables
- Imputed expenditure variables
- Weight and variance estimation variables

2.2 Reserved Codes

The following reserved code values are used:

Value	Definition
-1 INAPPLICABLE	Question was not asked due to skip pattern.
-7 REFUSED	Question was asked and respondent refused to answer question.
-8 DK	Question was asked and respondent did not know answer.
-9 NOT ASCERTAINED	Interviewer did not record the data.

Generally, -1,-7, -8, and -9 have not been edited on this file. The values of -1 and -9 can be edited by analysts by following the skip patterns in the questionnaire. A copy of the Household Component questionnaire can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://meps.ahrq.gov/> and clicking on the link in the Home Health box.

2.3 Codebook Format

The codebook describes an ASCII data set (although the data are also being provided in a SAS transport file). The following codebook items are provided for each variable:

Identifier	Description
Name	Variable name (maximum of 8 characters)
Description	Variable descriptor (maximum of 40 characters)
Format	Number of bytes
Type	Type of data: numeric (indicated by NUM) or character (indicated by CHAR)
Start	Beginning column position of variable in record
End	Ending column position of variable in record

2.4 Variable Naming

In general, variable names reflect the content of the variable, with an 8-character limitation. Generally, imputed/edited variables end with an “X.”

2.4.1 General

Variables were derived either from the HC questionnaire itself, the MPC data collection instrument, or from the CAPI. The source of each variable is identified in Section D, entitled, “Variable - Source Crosswalk.” Sources for each variable are indicated in one of four ways: (1) variables which are derived from CAPI or assigned in sampling are so indicated; (2) variables which come from one or more specific questions have those numbers and the questionnaire section indicated in the “Source” column; (3) variables constructed from multiple questions using complex algorithms are labeled “Constructed” in the “Source” column; and (4) variables which have been imputed are so indicated.

2.4.2 Expenditure and Sources of Payment Variables

The expenditure and sources of payment variable names follow a standard naming convention, are 7 characters in length and end in an “X” indicating editing/imputation. Please note that imputed means that a series of logical edits, as well as an imputation process to account for missing data, have been performed on the variable.

The total sum of payments, 12 sources of payment variables and total charge variable are named consistently in the following way:

The first two characters indicate the type of event:

IP - inpatient stay	OB - office-based visit
ER - emergency room visit	OP - outpatient visit
HH - home health event	DV - dental visit

OM - other medical equipment RX - prescribed medicine

In the case of sources of payment variables, the third and fourth characters indicate:

SF - self or family	OF - other Federal Government	XP - sum of payments
MR - Medicare	SL - State/local government	
MD - Medicaid	WC - Worker's Compensation	
PV - private insurance	OT - other insurance	
VA - Veteran's Administration	OR - other private	
CH - CHAMPUS/CHAMPVA	OU - other public	

The fifth and sixth characters indicate the year (99). The last character indicates whether it is edited/imputed (X).

For example, HHSF99X is the edited/imputed amount paid by self or family for a home health event expenditure incurred in 1999.

2.5 File Contents

2.5.1 Survey Administration

2.5.1.1 Person Identifiers (DUID, PID, DUPERSID)

The dwelling unit ID (DUID) is a 5-digit random number assigned after the case was sampled for MEPS. The 3-digit person number (PID) uniquely identifies each person within the dwelling unit. The 8-character variable DUPERSID uniquely identifies each person represented on the file and is the combination of the variables DUID and PID. For detailed information on dwelling units and families, please refer to Attachment 1.

2.5.1.2 Record Identifiers (EVNTIDX)

EVNTIDX uniquely identifies each event (i.e., each record on the file).

2.5.1.3 Round Indicators (EVENTRN, HHR2FLAG)

EVENTRN indicates the round in which the home health event was first reported.

HHR2FLAG indicates whether or not a Panel 3 Round 2 event occurred in 1999. HHR2FLAG was assigned a value = 1 where an event in Round 2 of Panel 3 occurred in a portion of calendar year 1999. Events from Panel 4 will have HHR2FLAG = -1. Typically, only Round 3 of a MEPS panel covers two calendar years, so the HHR2FLAG was developed to identify where data collection procedures were modified. All utilization data for calendar year 1999 is provided on this file regardless of the round in which it happened to be collected. Data users/analysts need not modify any procedures to deal with this departure from the usual data collection process as the event variables have been developed so that the process is transparent.

2.5.2 Characteristics of Home Health Events

The file contains 44 variables describing home health events reported by respondents in the Home Health section of the MEPS-HC questionnaire. The questionnaire contains specific probes for determining specific details about the home health event.

2.5.2.1 Date Home Health Event Started (HHBEGYR, HHBEGMM)

The start date variables (HHBEGYR and HHBEGMM) indicate the year and month that the household respondent reported as the start date (or the first time) for this type of home health event. An artifact of the data collection for the variable HHBEGYR is that all events are reported as having started in 1999 even though a person could have started receiving that type of home health care from that provider year(s) before 1999. These variables should not be interpreted as “true” start dates.

2.5.2.2 Characteristics of Home Health Events (MPCELIG-OTHCWOS)

The HC questionnaire determined whether the respondent indicated the home health provider event(s) for each month’s services was an agency or whether the provider was an independent paid provider (SELFAGEN). The response to the SELFAGEN question dictates the skip pattern to be followed regarding the questions in the home health section of the HC questionnaire. Respondents were also asked if the provider was paid or whether services were provided by a friend, relative, or volunteer (HHTYPE). The constructed variable MPCELIG indicates whether the home health provider event was eligible for MPC data collection and the type of imputation process the event went through. MPCELIG is a more accurate variable for determining whether the event was an agency, a paid independent or an informal care event. However, SELFAGEN is a more accurate variable for determining the home health questions asked of the respondent. All respondents receiving care from an agency, hospital or nursing home were asked to identify the type of home health worker they saw (CNA-SPEECTHP) -- for example, certified nursing assistant, home health aide, registered nurse, etc. Analysts should keep in mind that these identifications by household respondents are subjective in nature, are not mutually exclusive or collectively exhaustive, and should not be used to make certain estimates. For example, a person on one type of insurance may identify an individual providing home health care services to them as a personal care attendant while an individual having a different type of insurance coverage may identify that same worker as a home care aide. To make estimates of personal care attendants or home care aides based on their identification by household respondents and by treating these types of workers as mutually exclusive groups will result in inaccurate estimates. Respondents may also have indicated that they were seen by more than one home health care worker during a single event. For example, since an event is a month of services a respondent may have reported being seen by a nurse, a physical therapist, and/or a home health aide during a single event. Respondents were also asked to identify other non-skilled and skilled workers seen during that month of care (NONSKILL-OTHCWOS). However, “other specify” variables (SKILLWOS and OTHCWOS) were not reconciled with the type of health care worker variable (CNA-SPEECTHP). In addition, the type of health care worker variables (CNA-SPEECTHP) were not reconciled with MPCELIG, SELFAGEN and HHTYPE, so inconsistencies between these variables are possible.

2.5.2.3 Treatments, Therapies and Services (HOSPITAL-OTHSVCOS)

Regardless of the type of provider, all respondents were asked if the home health services they received were due to a hospitalization (HOSPITAL), whether it was due to a medical condition (VSTRELCN), if the person was helped with daily activities (DAILYACT), if the person received companionship services (COMPANY), and whether or not the person received any other type of services (OTHSVCE and OTHSVCOS). Only persons receiving care from an agency, hospital, or nursing home were asked if they were taught how to use medical equipment (MEDEQUIP) and whether or not they received a medical treatment (TREATMT).

2.5.2.4 Frequency of Home Health Events (FREQCY-HHDAYS)

Several variables identify the frequency and length of home health events (FREQCY-MINLONG) and whether or not the same services were received during each month (SAMESVCE). Frequency of event variables (FREQCY- TMSPPDAY) were used as building blocks to construct HHDAYS. HHDAYS indicates the number of days the respondent received care during that event (i.e., month of care). HHDAYS has not been reconciled with DAYSPMO. Frequency variables can be combined to get a measure of the intensity of care. For example, HHDAYS used in conjunction with HRSLONG and TMSPPDAY, can be used to form a measure of intensity of care -- that is, how many hours of care was provided in one month.

2.5.3 Condition and Procedure Codes and Clinical Classification Codes

Information on household reported medical conditions and procedures (including condition codes, procedure codes, and clinical classification codes) associated with each home health event are NOT provided on this file. To obtain complete condition information associated with an event, the analyst must link to the 1999 Medical Conditions File. Details on how to link to the MEPS 1999 Medical Conditions File are provided in the 1999 Appendix File.

2.5.4 Expenditure Data

2.5.4.1 Definition of Expenditures

Expenditures on this file refer to what is paid for health care services. More specifically, expenditures in MEPS are defined as the sum of payments for care received, including out of pocket payments and payments made by private insurance, Medicaid, Medicare and other sources. The definition of expenditures used in MEPS differs slightly from its predecessors, the 1987 NMES and 1977 NMCES surveys, where “charges” rather than sum of payments were used to measure expenditures. This change was adopted because charges became a less appropriate proxy for medical expenditures during the 1990’s due to the increasingly common practice of discounting. Although measuring expenditures as the sum of payments incorporates discounts in the MEPS expenditure estimates, these estimates do not incorporate any payment not directly tied to specific medical care events, such as bonuses or retrospective payment adjustments paid by third party payers. Another general change from the two prior surveys is that charges associated with uncollected liability, bad debt, and charitable care (unless provided by a public clinic or hospital) are not counted as expenditures because there are no payments

associated with those classifications. For details on expenditure definitions, please reference the following, “Informing American Health Care Policy” (Monheit et al., 1999). AHRQ has developed factors to apply to the 1987 NMES expenditure data to facilitate longitudinal analysis. These factors can be accessed via the CCFS Data Center. For more information, see the Data Center section of the MEPS Web Site at <http://www.meps.ahrq.gov/>.

2.5.4.2 Data Editing/Imputation Methodologies of Expenditure Variables

General Imputation Methodology

The general methodology used for editing and imputing expenditure data is described below. However, please note, home health events provided by an agency, hospital or nursing home were included in the MPC, and home health provided by paid independent providers were not included in the MPC. Although the general procedures remain the same for all home health events, there were some differences in the editing and imputation methodologies applied to those events followed in the MPC and those events not followed in the MPC. Analysts should note that home health care provided by friends, family, or volunteers were assumed to be free and were not included in any imputation process. Please see below for details on the differences between these editing/imputation methodologies.

Home health expenditure data for agency, hospital, and nursing home providers were collected exclusively from the MPC (i.e., household respondents were not asked to report home health expenditures from these types of providers). The MPC contacted 100 percent of the agency, hospital, and nursing home health providers identified by household respondents. Since paid independent home health providers were not included in the MPC, all expenditure data from these providers were collected from household respondents.

Logical edits were used to resolve internal inconsistencies and other problems in the HC and MPC survey-reported data. The edits were designed to preserve partial payment data from households and providers, and to identify actual and potential sources of payment for each household-reported event. In general, these edits accounted for outliers, co-payments or charges reported as total payments, and reimbursed amounts that were reported as out of pocket payments. In addition, edits were implemented to correct for mis-classifications between Medicare and Medicaid and between Medicare HMO's and private HMO's as payment sources. These edits produced a complete vector of expenditures for some events, and provided the starting point for imputing missing expenditures in the remaining events.

A weighted sequential hot-deck procedure was used to impute for missing expenditures, as well as total charge. The procedure uses survey data from respondents to replace missing data, while taking into account the respondents' weighted distribution in the imputation process. Classification variables vary by event type in the hot-deck imputations, but total charge and insurance coverage are key variables in all of the imputations.

Imputation Methodology for Home Health Events

Expenditures for home health events were developed in a sequence of logical edits and imputations. (Analysts should note that home health care provided by friends, family, or volunteers were assumed to not have expenditures associated with them and were not included in any imputation process. All expenditures for home health care provided by informal care providers were assigned –1 (inapplicable) because those types of events were skipped out of (never asked) the questions regarding expenditures.) “Household” edits were applied to sources and amounts of payment for all events reported for paid independent providers by HC respondents. “MPC” edits were applied to provider-reported sources and amounts of payment for records matched to household-reported events for all agency, hospital, and nursing home home health providers. Both sets of edits were used to correct obvious errors in the reporting of expenditures. Imputations for independent paid providers and for agencies, hospitals, and nursing homes were conducted separately. Separate imputations also were performed for simple events.

Logical edits were used to sort each event into a specific category for the imputations. Events with complete expenditures were flagged as potential donors for the hot-deck imputations while events with missing expenditure data were assigned to various recipient categories. Each event was assigned to a recipient category based on its pattern of missing data. For example, an event with a known total charge but no expenditure information was assigned to one category, while an event with a known total charge and some expenditure information was assigned to a different category. Similarly, events without a known total charge were assigned to various recipient categories based on the amount of missing data.

The logical edits produced eight recipient categories for events with missing data. Expenditures were imputed through separate hot-deck imputations for each of the eight recipient categories. The donor pool in these imputations was restricted to events with complete expenditures from either the HC or the MPC.

The donor pool included “free events” because, in some instances, providers are not paid for their services. These events represent charity care, bad debt, provider failure to bill, and third party payer restrictions on reimbursement in certain circumstances. If free events were excluded from the donor pool, total expenditures would be over-counted because the cost of free care would be implicitly included in paid events and explicitly included in events that should have been treated as free from provider. (This does not include MPCELIG=3 (informal) events. As stated previously, home health care provided by friends, family, or volunteers (informal, MPCELIG=3) were assumed to not have expenditures associated with them and were not included in any imputation process.)

Capitation Imputation

Health maintenance organizations (HMOs) receive time-based (capitation) payments to cover their members’ cost of health care. Services provided by HMOs are referred to as "capitated events" in the MEPS expenditure imputations. They are singled out for special treatment because the payments received by HMOs are not tied directly to individual events and services. That is, per person per month payments to an HMO, as opposed to fee-for-service reimbursement for health care, pose a problem

in the estimation of health care costs because MEPS uses event-level payments for service as its measure of expenditures. Capitated events are sent through their own imputation procedure.

Imputation Flag Variable (IMPFLAG)

Unlike prior data releases, only one imputation flag was created for 1999 event files. This flag, IMPFLAG, is a six category variable that indicates if the event contains complete Household Component (HC) or Medical Provider Component (MPC) data, was fully or partially imputed, or was imputed in the capitated imputation process. Following is how the new imputation flag is coded; the categories are mutually exclusive.

IMPFLAG=0 (not eligible for imputation)

IMPFLAG=1 (complete HC data)

IMPFLAG=2 (complete MPC data)

IMPFLAG=3 (fully imputed)

IMPFLAG=4 (partially imputed)

IMPFLAG=5 (capitation imputation)

Zero Expenditures

There are some medical events reported by respondents where the payments were zero. This could occur for several reasons including (1) free care was provided, (2) bad debt was incurred, (3) care was covered under a flat fee arrangement beginning in an earlier year, or (4) follow-up events were provided without a separate charge (e.g., after a surgical procedure). If all of the medical events for a person fell into one of these categories, then the total annual expenditures for that person would be zero. All expenditures for home health care provided by informal care providers (family, friends, or volunteers, MPCELIG=3) were assigned -1 (inapplicable) because those types of events were skipped out of (never asked) the questions regarding expenditures.

Discount Adjustment Factor

An adjustment was also applied to some HC reported expenditure data because an evaluation of matched HC/MPC data showed that respondents who reported that charges and payments were equal were often unaware that insurance payments for the care had been based on a discounted charge. To compensate for this systematic reporting error, a weighted sequential hot-deck imputation procedure was implemented to determine an adjustment factor for HC reported insurance payments when charges and payments were reported to be equal. As for the other imputations, selected predictor variables were used to form groups of donor and recipient events for the imputation process.

Sources of Payment

In addition to total expenditures, variables are provided which itemize expenditures according to major sources of payment categories. These categories are:

1. Out of pocket by user or family

2. Medicare
3. Medicaid
4. Private Insurance
5. Veteran's Administration, excluding CHAMPVA
6. CHAMPUS or CHAMPVA
7. Other Federal sources - includes Indian Health Service, Military Treatment Facilities, and other care by the Federal government
8. Other State and Local sources - includes community and neighborhood clinics, State and local health departments, and State programs other than Medicaid.
9. Worker's Compensation
10. Other Unclassified sources - includes sources such as automobile, homeowner's, liability, and other miscellaneous or unknown sources.

Two additional sources of payment variables were created to classify payments for events with apparent inconsistencies between insurance coverage and sources of payment based on data collected in the survey. These variables include:

11. Other Private - any type of private insurance payments reported for persons not reported to have any private health insurance coverage during the year as defined in MEPS; and
12. Other Public - Medicaid payments reported for persons who were not reported to be enrolled in the Medicaid program at any time during the year.

Though relatively small in magnitude, users should exercise caution when interpreting the expenditures associated with these two additional sources of payment. While these payments stem from apparent inconsistent responses to health insurance and sources of payment questions in the survey, some of these inconsistencies may have logical explanations. For example, private insurance coverage in MEPS is defined as having a major medical plan covering hospital and physician services. If a MEPS sampled person did not have such coverage but had a single service type insurance plan (e.g., dental insurance) that paid for a particular episode of care, those payments may be classified as "other private". Some of the "other public" payments may stem from confusion between Medicaid and other state and local programs or may be persons who were not enrolled in Medicaid, but were presumed eligible by a provider who ultimately received payments from the program.

Home Health Expenditure Variables (HHSF99X - HHXP99X)

There are 12 expenditure variables specific to paid independent home health events (MPCELIG=2) and 14 expenditure variables specific to agency home health events (MPCELIG=1). Home health agency, hospital, and nursing home events are sampled at a rate of 100% for the MPC. Households were not asked any expenditure-related questions in regards to these types of events; therefore, there are no household reported expenditure data for these events. Conversely, paid independent providers are not included in the MPC. Household reported responses are the only data available for these types of events. All expenditure data for paid independent providers are fully imputed from household reported expenditures. There are no expenditure data for informal care providers. Informal care

(MPCELIG=3, unpaid care provided by family, friends, or volunteers) were assigned -1 in all expenditure categories.

The constructed variable MPCELIG is provided on this file. MPCELIG indicates whether the home health provider event was eligible for MPC data collection, and MPCELIG determines the imputation process applied to that event.

All of these expenditures have gone through an editing and imputation process and have been rounded to the nearest penny. There is a sum of payments variable (HHXP99X) which for each home health event sums all the expenditures from the various sources of payment. The 12 sources of payment expenditure variables for each home health event are the following: amount paid by self or family (HHSF99X), amount paid by Medicare (HHMR99X), amount paid by Medicaid (HHMD99X), amount paid by private insurance (HHPV99X), amount paid by Veteran's Administration (HHVA99X), amount paid by CHAMPUS/CHAMPVA (HHCH99X), amount paid other Federal sources (HHOF99X), amount paid by State and Local (non-federal) government sources (HHSL99X), amount paid by Worker's Compensation (HHWC99X), and amount paid by some other source of insurance (HHOT99X). As mentioned previously, there are two additional expenditure variables called HHOR99X and HHOU99X (other private and other public, respectively). These two expenditure variables were created to maintain consistency between what the household reported as their private and public insurance status for hospitalization and physician coverage. Analysts can determine if a home health event was paid by an agency or some other paid independent provider by subsetting the variable MPCELIG to the appropriate and desired value.

Rounding

Expenditure variables on the 1999 home health event file have been rounded to the nearest penny. Person-level expenditure information released on the 1999 person-level expenditure file were rounded to the nearest dollar. It should be noted that using the 1999 MEPS event files to create person-level totals will yield slightly different totals than those on the 1999 person-level expenditure file. These differences are due to rounding only. Moreover, in some instances, the number of persons having expenditures on the 1999 event files for a particular source of payment may differ from the number of persons with expenditures on the 1999 person-level expenditure file for that source of payment. This difference is also an artifact of rounding only. Please see the 1999 Appendix File for details on such rounding differences.

3.0 Sample Weight (PERWT99F)

3.1 Overview

There is a single full year person-level weight (PERWT99F) assigned to each record for each key, in-scope person who responded to MEPS for the full period of time that he or she was in-scope during 1999. A key person either was a member of an NHIS household at the time of the NHIS interview, or became a member of such a household after being out-of-scope at the time of the NHIS (examples of the latter situation include newborns and persons returning from military service, an institution, or living outside the United States). A person is in-scope whenever he or

she is a member of the civilian noninstitutionalized portion of the U.S. population.

3.2 Details on Person Weights Construction

The person-level weight PERWT99F was developed in three stages. A person level weight for Panel 4 was created, including both an adjustment for nonresponse over time and poststratification, controlling to Current Population Survey (CPS) population estimates based on five variables. Variables used in the establishment of person-level poststratification control figures included: census region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West); MSA status (MSA, non-MSA); race/ethnicity (Hispanic, black but non-Hispanic, and other); sex; and age. Then a person level weight for Panel 3 was created, again including an adjustment for nonresponse over time and poststratification, again controlling to CPS population estimates based on the same five variables. When poverty status information derived from income variables became available, a 1999 composite weight was formed from the Panel 3 and Panel 4 weights by multiplying the Panel weights by .5. Then a final poststratification was done on this composite weight variable, including poverty status (below poverty, from 100 to 125 percent of poverty, from 125 to 200 percent of poverty, from 200 to 400 percent of poverty, at least 400 percent of poverty) as well as the original five poststratification variables in the establishment of control totals.

3.2.1 MEPS Panel 3 Weight

The person level weight for MEPS Panel 3 was developed using the 1998 full year weight for an individual as a “base” weight for survey participants present in 1998. For key, in-scope respondents who joined a RU some time in 1999 after being out of scope in 1998, the 1998 family weight associated with the family the person joined served as a “base” weight. The weighting process included an adjustment for nonresponse over Rounds 4 and 5 as well as poststratification to population control figures for December 1999. These control figures were derived by scaling back the population totals obtained from the March 1999 CPS to reflect the December, 1999 CPS estimated population distribution across age and sex categories as of December, 1999. Variables used in the establishment of person level poststratification control figures included: census region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West); MSA status (MSA, non-MSA); race/ethnicity (Hispanic, black but non-Hispanic, and other); sex, and age. Overall, the weighted population estimate for the civilian, noninstitutionalized population on December 31, 1999 is 273,003,778. Key, responding persons not in-scope on December 31, 1999 but in-scope earlier in the year retained, as their final Panel 3 weight, the weight after the nonresponse adjustment.

3.2.2 MEPS Panel 4 Weight

The person level weight for MEPS Panel 4 was developed using the MEPS Round 1 person-level weight as a “base” weight. For key, in-scope respondents who joined a RU after Round 1, the Round 1 family weight served as a “base” weight. The weighting process included an adjustment for nonresponse over Round 2 and the 1999 portion of Round 3 as well as poststratification to the same population control figures for December 1999 used for the MEPS Panel 3 weights. The same five variables employed for Panel 3 poststratification (census region, MSA status, race/ethnicity, sex, and age) were used for Panel 4 poststratification. Similarly, for Panel 4, key,

responding persons not in-scope on December 31, 1999 but in-scope earlier in the year retained, as their final Panel 4 weight, the weight after the nonresponse adjustment.

Note that the MEPS round 1 weights (for both panels with one exception as noted below) incorporated the following components: the original household probability of selection for the NHIS; ratio-adjustment to NHIS-based national population estimates at the household (occupied dwelling unit) level; adjustment for nonresponse at the dwelling unit level for Round 1; and poststratification to figures at the family and person level obtained from the March 1999 CPS data base.

3.2.3 The Final Weight for 1999

Variables used in the establishment of person level poststratification control figures included: poverty status (below poverty, from 100 to 125 percent of poverty, from 125 to 200 percent of poverty, from 200 to 400 percent of poverty, at least 400 percent of poverty); census region

(Northeast, Midwest, South, West); MSA status (MSA, non-MSA); race/ethnicity (Hispanic, black but non-Hispanic, and other); sex, and age. Overall, the weighted population estimate for the civilian, noninstitutionalized population for December 31, 1999 is 273,003,778 (PERWT99F>0 and INSC1231=1). The inclusion of key, in-scope persons who were not in-scope on December 31, 1999 brings the estimated total number of persons represented by the MEPS respondents over the course of the year up to 276,410,767 (PERWT99F>0). The weighting process included poststratification to population totals obtained from the 1996 MEPS Nursing Home Component for the number of individuals admitted to nursing homes. For the 1999 full year file an additional poststratification was done to population totals obtained from the 1998 Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS) for the number of deaths among Medicare beneficiaries experienced in the 1999 MEPS.

3.2.4 Coverage

The target population for MEPS in this file is the 1999 U.S. civilian, noninstitutionalized population. However, the MEPS sampled households are a subsample of the NHIS households interviewed in 1998 (Panel 3) and 1999 (Panel 4). New households created after the NHIS interviews for the respective Panels and consisting exclusively of persons who entered the target population after 1998 (Panel 3) or after 1999 (Panel 4) are not covered by MEPS. These would include families consisting solely of: immigrants; persons leaving the military; U.S. citizens returning from residence in another country; and persons leaving institutions. It should be noted that this set of uncovered persons constitutes only a tiny proportion of the MEPS target population.

4.0 Strategies for Estimation

This file is constructed for efficient estimation of utilization, expenditure, and sources of payment for home health provider visits and to allow for estimates of number of persons with home health provider visits in 1999.

4.1 Variables with Missing Values

It is essential that the analyst examine all variables for the presence of negative values used to represent missing values. For continuous or discrete variables, where means or totals may be taken, it may be necessary to set minus values to values appropriate to the analytic needs. That is, the analyst should either impute a value or set the value to one that will be interpreted as missing by the computing language used. For categorical and dichotomous variables, the analyst may want to consider whether to recode or impute a value for cases with negative values or whether to exclude or include such cases in the numerator and/or denominator when calculating proportions.

Methodologies used for the editing/imputation of expenditure variables (e.g. sources of payment, flat fee, and zero expenditures) are described in Section 2.5.4.2.

4.2 Basic Estimates of Utilization, Expenditure and Sources of Payment

While the examples described below illustrate the use of event level data in constructing person level total expenditures, these estimates can also be derived from the person level expenditure file unless the characteristic of interest is event specific.

In order to produce national estimates related to home health provider visits utilization, expenditure and sources of payment, the value in each record contributing to the estimates must be multiplied by the weight (PERWT99F) contained on that record.

Example 1

For example, the total number of home health paid independent provider visits, for the civilian non-institutionalized population of the U.S. in 1999, is estimated as the sum of the weight (PERWT99F) across all home health paid independent provider records. That is,

$$\sum W_j = 5,890,083 \quad \text{across all records with MPCELIG} = 2 \quad (1)$$

Example 2

Subsetting to records based on characteristics of interest expands the scope of potential estimates. For example, the estimate for the mean out-of-pocket payment per paid independent home health provider event (for those who had such expense greater than 0) should be calculated as the weighted mean of the paid independent home health provider's bill paid by self/family. That is,

$$(\sum W_j X_j)/(\sum W_j) = \$282.82 \quad (2)$$

where

$$\sum W_j = 5,727,760 \quad \text{and} \quad X_j = \text{HHSF99X}_j$$

for all home health visits by paid independent provider (MPCELIG=2) with HHXP99X_j > 0

This gives \$282.82 as the estimated mean amount of out-of-pocket payment of expenditures associated with home health events by paid independent providers and 5,727,760 as an estimate of the total number of home health events by paid independent providers with expenditure. Both of these estimates are for the civilian non-institutionalized population of the U.S. in 1999.

Example 3

Another example would be to estimate the average proportion of total expenditures (where event expense is greater than 0) paid by private insurance for home health events by paid independent providers. This should be calculated as the weighted mean of proportion of total expenditures paid by private insurance at the home health event level. That is

$$(\sum W_j Y_j)/(\sum W_j) = 0.0663 \quad (3)$$

where

$$\sum W_j = 5,727,760 \quad \text{and} \quad Y_j = \text{HHPV99X}_j / \text{HHXP99X}_j$$

for all home health visits by paid independent provider (MPCELIG=2) with HHXP99X_j > 0

This gives 0.0663 as the estimated mean proportion of total expenditures paid by private insurance for home health events by paid independent providers with expenditures for the civilian non-institutionalized population of the U.S. in 1999.

4.3 Estimates of the Number of Persons with Home Health Events Due to a Hospitalization

When calculating an estimate of the total number of persons with home health events by paid independent providers, users can use a person-level file (MEPS HC-038: Person-level Expenditures and Utilization) or the current file. However, the current file must be used, when the measure of interest is defined at the event level. For example, to estimate the number of home health events where services were provided due to a hospitalization, the current file must be used.

This would be estimated as,

$$\sum W_i X_i \quad \text{across all unique persons } i \text{ on this file} \quad (4)$$

where

W_i is the sampling weight (PERWT99F) for person i

and

$X_i = 1$ if HOSPITAL _{j} = 1 for any home health visits by paid independent provider of person i .

$= 0$ otherwise

4.4 Person-Based Ratio Estimates

4.4.1 Person-Based Ratio Estimates Relative to Persons with Home Health Events by Paid Independent Providers

This file may be used to derive person-based ratio estimates. However, when calculating ratio estimates where the denominator is persons, care should be taken to properly define the unit of analysis up to person-level. For example, the mean expense for persons with home health events by paid independent providers (MPCELIG =2) is estimated as,

$$(\sum W_i Z_i)/(\sum W_i) \quad \text{across all unique persons } i \text{ on this file} \quad (5)$$

where

W_i is the sampling weight (PERWT99F) for person i

and

$Z_i = \sum \text{HHXP99X}_j$ across all home health visits by paid independent provider for person i .

4.4.2 Person-Based Ratio Estimates Relative to the Entire Population

If the ratio relates to the entire population, this file cannot be used to calculate the denominator, as only those persons with at least one home health provider event are represented on this data file. In this case MEPS File HC-038, which has data for all sampled persons, must be used to estimate the total number of persons (i.e. those with events and those without events).

For example, to estimate the proportion of civilian non-institutionalized population of the U.S. with at least one home health event by a paid independent provider, the numerator would be derived from data on the current file, and the denominator should be derived from data on the MEPS HC-038 person-level file. That is,

$$(\sum W_i Z_i)/(\sum W_i) \quad \text{across all unique persons } i \text{ on the MEPS HC-038 file} \quad (6)$$

where

W_i is the sampling weight (PERWT99F) for person i

and

$Z_i = 1$ if MPCELIG _{j} = 2 for any home health visits by paid independent provider of

person i.
= 0 otherwise.

4.5 Sampling Weights for Merging Previous Releases of MEPS Household Data with this Event File

There have been several previous releases of MEPS Household Survey public use data. Unless a variable name common to several files is provided, the sampling weights contained on these data files are file-specific. The file-specific weights reflect minor adjustments to eligibility and response indicators due to birth, death, or institutionalization among respondents.

For estimates from a MEPS data file that do not require merging with variables from other MEPS data files, the sampling weight(s) provided on that data file are the appropriate weight(s). When merging a MEPS Household data file to another, the major analytical variable (i.e. the dependent variable) determines the correct sampling weight to use.

4.6 Variance Estimation

To obtain estimates of variability (such as the standard error of sample estimates or corresponding confidence intervals) for estimates based on MEPS survey data, one needs to take into account the complex sample design of MEPS. Various approaches can be used to develop such estimates of variance including use of the Taylor series or various replication methodologies. Replicate weights have not been developed for the MEPS 1999 data. Variables needed to implement a Taylor series estimation approach are provided in the file and are described in the paragraph below.

Using a Taylor Series approach, variance estimation strata and the variance estimation PSUs within these strata must be specified. The corresponding variables on the MEPS full year utilization database are VARSTR99 and VARPSU99, respectively. Specifying a “with replacement” design in a computer software package such as SUDAAN (Shah, 1996) should provide standard errors appropriate for assessing the variability of MEPS survey estimates. It should be noted that the number of degrees of freedom associated with estimates of variability indicated by such a package may not appropriately reflect the actual number available. For MEPS sample estimates for characteristics generally distributed throughout the country (and thus the sample PSUs), there are over 100 degrees of freedom associated with the corresponding estimates of variance. The following illustrates these concepts using two examples from section 4.2.

Examples 2 and 3 from Section 4.2

Using a Taylor Series approach, specifying VARSTR99 and VARPSU99 as the variance estimation strata and PSUs (within these strata) respectively and specifying a `with replacement` design in a computer software package SUDAAN will yield standard error estimates of \$67.45 and 0.0256 for the estimated mean of out-of-pocket payment and the estimated mean proportion of total expenditures paid by private insurance respectively.

5.0 Merging/Linking MEPS Data Files

Data from this file can be used alone or in conjunction with other files. This section provides instructions, or the details on where to find the instructions, for linking the 1999 home health provider events with other 1999 MEPS public use files, including the 1999 conditions file, the 1999 prescribed medicines file, and a 1999 person-level file.

5.1 Linking a 1999 Person-Level File to the 1999 Home Health Provider Event File

Merging characteristics of interest from other 1999 MEPS files (e.g., the 1999 Full Year Population Characteristics File or the 1999 Prescribed Medicines File) expands the scope of potential estimates. For example, to estimate the total number of home health provider events of persons with specific characteristics (e.g., age, race, and sex), population characteristics from a person-level file need to be merged onto the home health provider file. This procedure is illustrated below. The 1999 Appendix File provides additional details on how to merge 1999 MEPS data files.

1. Create data set PERS by sorting a Full Year Population Characteristics File, (file HCXXX), by the person identifier, DUPERSID. Keep only variables to be merged on to the home health provider event file and DUPERSID.
2. Create data set HVIS by sorting the home health provider event file by person identifier, DUPERSID.
3. Create final data set NEWHVIS by merging these two files by DUPERSID, keeping only records on the home health provider event file.

The following is an example of SAS code, which completes these steps:

```
PROC SORT DATA=HCXXX(KEEP=DUPERSID AGE SEX RACEX)  
OUT=PERSX;  
  BY DUPERSID;  
RUN;  
  
PROC SORT DATA=HVIS;  
  BY DUPERSID;  
RUN;  
  
DATA NEWHVIS;  
  MERGE HVIS (IN=A) PERSX(IN=B);  
  BY DUPERSID;  
  IF A;  
RUN;
```

5.2 Linking the 1999 Home Health Provider Event File to the 1999 Medical Conditions File and/or the 1999 Prescribed Medicines File

Due to survey design issues, there are limitations/caveats that an analyst must keep in mind when linking the different files. This limitations/caveats are listed below. For detailed linking examples, including SAS code, analysts should refer to the 1999 Appendix file.

5.3 Limitations/Caveats of RXLK (the 1999 Prescribed Medicine Link File)

The RXLK file provides a link from the 1999 prescribed medicine records to the other 1999 event files. When using RXLK, analysts should keep in mind that one home health event can link to more than one prescribed medicine record. Conversely, a prescribed medicine record may link to more than one home health event or different types of events. When this occurs, it is up to the analyst to determine how the prescribed medicine expenditures should be allocated among those medical events.

5.4 Limitations/Caveats of CLNK (the 1999 Medical Conditions Link File)

The CLNK provides a link from 1999 MEPS event files to the 1999 Medical Conditions File. When using the CLNK, analysts should keep in mind that (1) conditions are self-reported and (2) there may be multiple conditions associated with a home health provider event. Users should also note that not all home health provider events link to the condition file.

References

- Cohen, S.B. (1998). Sample Design of the 1996 Medical Expenditure Panel Survey Medical Provider Component. *Journal of Economic and Social Measurement*. Vol 24, 25-53.
- Cohen, S.B. (1997). Sample Design of the 1996 Medical Expenditure Panel Survey Household Component. Rockville (MD): Agency for Health Care Policy and Research; 1997. *MEPS Methodology Report, No. 2*. AHCPR Pub. No. 97-0027.
- Cohen, J.W. (1997). Design and Methods of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey Household Component. Rockville (MD): Agency for Health Care Policy and Research; 1997. *MEPS Methodology Report, No. 1*. AHCPR Pub. No. 97-0026.
- Cohen, S.B. (1996). The Redesign of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey: A Component of the DHHS Survey Integration Plan. *Proceedings of the COPAFS Seminar on Statistical Methodology in the Public Service*.
- Cox, B.G. and Cohen, S.B. (1985). Chapter 8: Imputation Procedures to Compensate for Missing Responses to Data Items. In *Methodological Issues for Health Care Surveys*. Marcel Dekker, New York.
- Monheit, A.C., Wilson, R., and Arnett, III, R.H. (Editors). *Informing American Health Care Policy*. (1999). Jossey-Bass Inc, San Francisco.
- Shah, B.V., Barnwell, B.G., Bieler, G.S., Boyle, K.E., Folsom, R.E., Lavange, L., Wheelless, S.C., and Williams, R. (1996). *Technical Manual: Statistical Methods and Algorithms Used in SUDAAN Release 7.0*, Research Triangle Park, NC: Research Triangle Institute.

Attachment 1

Definitions

Dwelling Units, Reporting Units, Families, and Persons - The definitions of Dwelling Units (DUs) and Group Quarters in the MEPS Household Survey are generally consistent with the definitions employed for the National Health Interview Survey. The dwelling unit ID (DUID) is a five-digit random ID number assigned after the case was sampled for MEPS. The person number (PID) uniquely identifies all persons within the dwelling unit. The variable DUPERSID is the combination of the variables DUID and PID.

A Reporting Unit (RU) is a person or a group of persons in the sampled dwelling unit who is related by blood, marriage, adoption or other family association, and who is to be interviewed as a group in MEPS. Thus, the RU serves chiefly as a family-based “survey operations” unit rather than an analytic unit. Regardless of the legal status of their association, two persons living together as a “family” unit were treated as a single reporting unit if they chose to be so identified.

Unmarried college students under 24 years of age, who usually live in the sampled household but were living away from home and going to school at the time of the Round 1 MEPS interview, were treated as a Reporting Unit separate from that of their parents for the purpose of data collection. These variables can be found on MEPS person-level files.

In-Scope - A person was classified as in-scope (INSCOPE) if he or she was a member of the U.S. civilian, non-institutionalized population at some time during the Round 1 interview. This variable can be found on MEPS person-level files.

Keyness - The term “keyness” is related to an individual’s chance of being included in MEPS. A person is key if that person is appropriately linked to the set of NHIS sampled households designated for inclusion in MEPS. Specifically, a key person either was a member of an NHIS household at the time of the NHIS interview or became a member of such a household after being out-of-scope prior to joining that household (examples of the latter situation include newborns and persons returning from military service, persons returning from an institution, or persons living outside the United States).

A non-key person is one whose chance of selection for the NHIS (and MEPS) was associated with a household that was eligible but not sampled for the NHIS, who happened to have become a member of a MEPS reporting unit by the time of the MEPS Round 1 interview. MEPS data, (e.g., utilization and income) were collected for the period of time a non-key person was part of the sampled unit to permit family level analyses. However, non-key persons who leave a sample household would not be recontacted for subsequent interviews. Non-key individuals are not part of the target sample used to obtain person-level national estimates.

It should be pointed out that a person may be key even though not part of the civilian, non-institutionalized portion of the U.S population. For example, a person in the military may be living with his or her civilian spouse and children in a household sampled for the NHIS. The person in the military would be considered a key person for MEPS. However, such a person would not receive a

person-level sample weight so long as he or she was in the military. All key persons who participated in the first round of a MEPS panel received a person-level sample weight except those who were in the military. The variable indicating “keyness” is KEYNESS. This variable can be found on MEPS person-level files.

Eligibility - The eligibility of a person for MEPS pertains to whether or not data were to be collected for that person. All key, in-scope persons of a sampled RU were eligible for data collection. The only non-key persons eligible for data collection were those who happened to be living in the same RU as one or more key persons, and their eligibility continued only for the time that they were living with a key person. The only out-of-scope persons eligible for data collection were those who were living with key in-scope persons, again only for the time they were living with a key person. Only military persons meet this description. A person was considered eligible if they were eligible at any time during Round 1. The variable indicating “eligibility” is ELIGRND1, where 1 is coded for persons eligible for data collection for at least a portion of the Round 1 reference period, and 2 is coded for persons not eligible for data collection at any time during the first round reference period. This variable can be found on MEPS person-level files.

Pre-imputed - This means that only a series of logical edits were applied to the HC data to correct for several problems including outliers, co-payments or charges reported as total payments, and reimbursed amounts counted as out-of-pocket payments. Missing data remains.

Unimputed - This means that only a series of logical edits were applied to the MPC data to correct for several problems including outliers, co-payments or charges reported as total payments, and reimbursed amounts counted as out-of-pocket payments. These data were used as the imputation source to account for missing HC data.

Imputation - A method of estimating values for cases with missing data. Hot-deck imputation creates a data set with complete data for all nonrespondent cases, by substituting the data from a respondent case that resembles the nonrespondent on certain known variables.

D. Variable-Source Crosswalk

VARIABLE-SOURCE CROSSWALK

FOR MEPS HC-033H: 1999 HOME HEALTH EVENTS PUBLIC USE FILE RELEASE

Survey Administration Variables - Public Use

Variable	Description	Source
DUID	Dwelling unit ID (encrypted)	Assigned in sampling
PID	Person number (encrypted)	Assigned in sampling
DUPERSID	Sample person ID (DUID + PID) (encrypted)	Assigned in sampling
EVNTIDX	Event ID (encrypted)	Assigned in Sampling
EVENTRN	Event round number	CAPI derived
HHR2FLAG	Flag indicating whether or not a Panel 3 Round 2 event occurred in 1999	CAPI derived/ Constructed

Home Health Events Variables - Public Use

Variable	Description	Source
HHBEGYR	Event start date – year	EV04/EV05
HHBEGMM	Event start date – month	EV04/EV05
MPCELIG	MPC eligibility flag	Constructed
SELFAGEN	Does provider work for agency or self	EV06A
HHTYPE	Home health event type	EV06
CNA	Type of health care worker – certified nurse assistant	HH01
COMPANN	Type of health care worker – companion	HH01
DIETICN	Type of health care worker – dietitian/nutritionist	HH01
HHAIDE	Type of health care worker – home health/home care aide	HH01
HOSPICE	Type of health care worker – hospice worker	HH01
HMEMAKER	Type of health care worker- homemaker	HH01

Variable	Description	Source
IVTHP	Type of health care worker – IV or infusion therapist	HH01
MEDLDOC	Type of health care worker – medical doctor	HH01
NURPRACT	Type of health care worker – nurse/nurse practitioner	HH01
NURRAIDE	Type of health care worker – nurse’s aide	HH01
OCCUPTHP	Type of health care worker – occupational therapist	HH01
PERSONAL	Type of health care worker – personal care attendant	HH01
PHYSLTHP	Type of health care worker – physical therapist	HH01
RESPTHP	Type of health care worker – respiratory therapist	HH01
SOCIALW	Type of health care worker – social worker	HH01
SPEECTHP	Type of health care worker – speech therapist	HH01
OTHRHCW	Type of health care worker – other	HH01
NONSKILL	Type of health care worker – non-skilled	HH02
SKILLED	Type of health care worker – skilled	HH02
SKILLWOS	Specify type of skilled worker	HH02
OTHCW	Type of health care worker – some other type of health care worker	HH02
OTHCWOS	Specify other type of health care worker	HH02
HOSPITAL	Any home health care provider event due to hospitalization	HH03
VSTRELCN	Any home health care provider event related to a health condition	HH04
TREATMT	Person received medical treatment	HH06
MEDEQUIP	Person was taught how to use medical equipment	HH07
DAILYACT	Person was helped with daily activities	HH08
COMPANY	Person received companionship services	HH09
OTHSVCE	Person received other home health care services	HH10
OTHSVCOS	Specify other home health care service received	HH10
FREQCY	Provider helped person every week/some weeks	HH11
DAYSPWK	Number of days per week provider came (agency events only)	HH12

Variable	Description	Source
DAYSPMO	Number of days per month provider came (agency events only)	HH13
HOWOFTEN	Provider came once per day or more than once per day	HH14
TMSPDAY	Times per day provider came to home to help	HH15
HRSLONG	Hours each visit lasted	HH16
MINLONG	Minutes each visit lasted	HH16
SAMESVCE	Any other months person received services	HH17
HHDAYS	Number of days person received care per month for that event	Constructed

Imputed Expenditure Variables – Public Use

Variable	Description	Source
HHSF99X	Amount paid, family <i>note: rounded to cents</i>	CP11 (Edited/Imputed)
HHMR99X	Amount paid, Medicare <i>note: rounded to cents</i>	CP09 (Edited/Imputed)
HHMD99X	Amount paid, Medicaid <i>note: rounded to cents</i>	CP07 (Edited/Imputed)
HHPV99X	Amount paid, private insurance <i>note: rounded to cents</i>	CP07 (Edited/Imputed)
HHVA99X	Amount paid, Veterans <i>note: rounded to cents</i>	CP07 (Edited/Imputed)
HHCH99X	Amount paid, CHAMPUS/CHAMPVA <i>note: rounded to cents</i>	CP07 (Edited/Imputed)
HHOF99X	Amount paid, other federal <i>note: rounded to cents</i>	CP07 (Edited/Imputed)
HHSL99X	Amount paid, state and local government <i>Note: rounded to cents</i>	CP07 (Edited/Imputed)
HHWC99X	Amount paid, worker's compensation <i>Note: rounded to cents</i>	CP07 (Edited/Imputed)
HHOR99X	Amount paid, other private <i>Note: rounded to cents</i>	Constructed
HHOU99X	Amount paid, other public <i>Note: rounded to cents</i>	Constructed
HHOT99X	Amount paid, other insurance <i>Note: rounded to cents</i>	CP07 (Edited/Imputed)
HHXP99X	Sum of payments HHSF99X – HHOT99X <i>Note: rounded to cents</i>	Constructed
HHTC99X	Total charge for visit <i>Note: rounded to cents</i>	CP09 (Edited/Imputed)
IMPFLAG	Flag indicating if the event contains complete HC or MPC data, was fully or partially imputed, or was imputed in the capitated imputation process	Constructed

Weights - Public Use

Variable	Description	Source
PERWT99F	Final person-level weight, 1999 (poverty/mortality/nursing home adjusted)	Constructed
VARPSU99	Variance estimation PSU 1999	Constructed
VARSTR99	Variance estimation stratum, 1999	Constructed