



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

OMB #: 0935-0108

Agency for Healthcare
Research and Quality

One or more of your customers is participating in the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS), a nationwide study of healthcare use and expenditures. The study is being conducted by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), both part of the U.S. Public Health Service.

MEPS is designed to help understand how the dramatic growth of managed care, changes in private health insurance, and other dynamics of today's market-driven delivery system have affected, and are likely to affect, the kinds, amounts, and costs of health care that Americans use. MEPS also allows for projecting who benefits from and bears the cost of changes to existing health policy.

Health insurance companies, pharmaceutical firms, health care consultants, and other health-related businesses have used these data in various ways. Researchers can examine access to and the costs of prescription medicines across various populations based on their demographics, employment status, geographic locale, or other factors.

Some of your customers who are participants in our study have signed authorization forms for you to provide to us by fax or mail, a printout of their patient profile (see enclosed customer list and authorization forms). If you have any questions about this data request, please call toll-free at 1-800-318-3843 to speak with a data collection coordinator.

Sincerely,

Carolyn M. Clancy, M.D.
Director
Agency for Healthcare
Research and Quality

Edward J. Sondik, Ph.D.
Director
National Center for Health Statistics
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average five minutes per patient. Any comments regarding this burden or estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information including suggestions for reducing this burden should be sent to: Reports Clearance Office, Attention: PRA, United States Public Health Service, Paperwork Reduction Project (0935-0098), Hubert Humphrey Building, Room 737F, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20201.

This survey is authorized by section 902(a) of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 299a]. Participation is voluntary, but we are depending on you to help us toward a more complete understanding of the nation's health care. The customer information we obtain will be used for research purposes only and will be released publicly only in summary form in which establishments or individuals cannot be identified. The confidentiality of patient information is protected by Federal Statute, Section 924(c) and Section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 299c-3(c) and 242m(d)]. This law prohibits the release outside the sponsoring agencies or their contractors of information that would permit identification of a patient or establishment without first obtaining authorization from the patient or establishment who gave the information.