

Medical Provider Component

M E D I C A L E X P E N D I T U R E P A N E L S U R V E Y

**SEPARATELY
BILLING DOCTORS**

What is the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey?

The Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS) is a nationwide study conducted to learn more about the health care services people use, the charges for those services and the sources that pay for them. MEPS is conducted annually by the U.S. Public Health Service through the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Major components of MEPS include surveys of:

- A nationally representative sample of households;
- Hospitals, physicians, and pharmacies reported by the household participants; and
- Providers of health insurance.

MEPS is the most complete source of data available on health care use and expenses in the United States.

How are practitioners chosen for the MEPS Separately Billing Doctor Component?

Practitioners are identified by respondents during the hospital data collection using the patient's medical record. These identified practitioners have provided health care to the patient in a hospital setting and billed the patient separately for medical services they have provided. Authorization forms signed by the patient can be sent which authorizes and requests medical care providers to release information sought by the study.

Why should this practice participate?

Expenditures from practitioners who bill for their services separately from the hospital are a major component of health care costs. The information that you supply will supplement that given by your patient and help us build a more complete picture of health care expenditures for respondents in our study. Your patients have asked specifically for your help by signing the authorization form.

What information is needed?

For each of the patients on the enclosed list, we need information about their 2005 medical events.

For each date of service, we need:

- Date of service
- Diagnoses (ICD-9 or DSM-4 codes)
- Services provided (CPT-4, or other relevant codes)
- Full established charge
- Method of reimbursement (fee-for-service or capitated)
- Payment sources/amounts.

How do I know the information will be kept confidential?

All data is kept in strict confidence. The confidentiality of data collected for MEPS is protected by Federal law under Sections 924(c) and 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 299c-3(c) and 242m(d)]. Identifying information collected for the study cannot be released without the permission of the individuals or establishments who provided the information.

Personal identifying information such as names or addresses are removed before information from the study is made available to researchers. Findings are published in statistical summaries and tables and micro-data is released on "public use" data files.

Who is collecting this data?

The U.S. Public Health Service has chosen Westat, a national research company, to administer the study. A professionally trained data collection specialist from Westat will contact each medical provider participating in the study.

What questions will the data collected answer?

MEPS data provide answers to many important questions. For example:

- How much of medical costs are covered by insurance?
- What do people pay out of pocket for their medical care?
- What conditions are being treated by medical providers?
- What types of health care services are people receiving from medical providers?

Any further questions?

Please call toll-free, at
1-800-792-3656.

For direct access to information about MEPS, go to
<http://www.meps.ahrq.gov>.