

## **Attachment 5a. Advance Letter**

## 2007 NHIS Advance Letter

### WE NEED YOUR HELP

...to improve the health of all Americans. You may be invited to take part in the National Health Interview Survey. The survey is sponsored by the National Center for Health Statistics, a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

A Census Bureau interviewer will show you an official identification card. You will be asked about your and your family's health and health care.

Your answers will be used only to conduct research on health and to help determine how best to use available dollars and personnel to solve health problems. While you will not receive any immediate benefit from participating in this survey, all Americans benefit from decisions about health care and health problems that are based on the best available information.

Everything you tell us will be kept strictly private. Unless you agree, federal law does not allow us to release information that could identify you or your family. The only parties that can receive such data are those we've told you about on the back of this letter.

We may obtain data about your family's health and health care from records of other government agencies. Any data obtained will also be kept strictly private.

You may take part in the survey or not. That is your choice. No penalties or loss of benefits will come from refusing. You may choose not to answer any question and can stop at any time. The survey will take about an hour to do all parts, depending on the size and health of your family. You may be asked to take part in other government surveys sometime in the future. Taking part in any other survey is voluntary. For quality purposes, a small number of households will be asked in a few weeks to confirm that correct interviewing procedures were followed.

Please contact the Census Bureau, toll-free, at 1-800-835-9752 if you have questions about the survey or to schedule an interview.

You may want to ask about your rights as a participant in this research study. If so, please call the office set up to oversee research, toll-free, at 1-800-223-8118. Please leave a brief message with your name and phone number. Say you are calling about Protocol # 2004-13. Your call will be returned promptly.

Learn more about the survey at our website:

Thank you for your cooperation. We are grateful for your help.

Sincerely

Edward J. Sondik, Ph.D.  
Director, National Center for Health Statistics

**National Health Interview Survey (1957-2007)**  
**Celebrating the first 50 Years**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NATIONAL HEALTH INTERVIEW SURVEY (NHIS)**

### **1. HOW WAS I CHOSEN FOR THE SURVEY?**

Every week about 1,400 addresses are chosen by scientific sampling methods to serve as a cross section of the entire United States. The people at those addresses are interviewed to obtain information used to describe the health of all Americans.

### **2. WHY NOT INTERVIEW AT THE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET? WHY IS MY PARTICIPATION IMPORTANT?**

Because scientific sampling methods do not permit the substitution of another address for those originally selected, we cannot change another address for yours. It is important that the people living in the address selected be a part of the survey in order to provide the most accurate picture of the Nation's health.

### **3. I'M NOT SICK—WHY SHOULD I BE INCLUDED IN A HEALTH SURVEY?**

This is a survey of the Nation's health. We want to know how many people are sick and why they are sick, but it is also important to know how many people are healthy and why they are healthy. These answers will help keep the Nation healthy.

### **4. WILL THE DATA BE HELD CONFIDENTIAL?**

The NHIS is authorized by Congress in Section 306 of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 242K). All information collected in this survey will be held in strict confidence according to law [Section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 United States Code 242m (d) and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (PL 107-347)]. Aside from NCHS employees and contractors, the only parties that can receive your personal information are the U.S. Census Bureau and our collaborators (persons who have worked as our full partners from the earliest stages of this survey). These parties, who will use your information for statistical research only and to carry out this survey, are bound by strong restrictions designed to guarantee your privacy. By law we cannot release information that could identify you or your family to anyone else without your consent. If any federal employee or contractor gives out confidential information not authorized by law, he or she can be fired and fined and/or imprisoned.

### **5. WHAT KIND OF INFORMATION IS COLLECTED IN THE NHIS?**

The NHIS covers a wide range of health topics such as doctor visits, health insurance, exercise, vaccinations, and injuries. Most respondents have no difficulty answering the questions in the NHIS. However, some people may consider questions on a few topics, such as income, sensitive. You do not have to answer any questions you don't want to.