

The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will conduct a small pilot test with respondent debriefings on the National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NHAMCS) , sponsored by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) wants to expand the sample of the NHAMCS to include ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs). The CDC currently conducts the National Survey on Ambulatory Surgery (NSAS) every ten years. Due to funding constraints they have decided to include ASCs in the annual NHAMCS sample, which currently collects data from hospital emergency rooms and outpatient department clinics. They will begin with hospital-based ASCs in 2009 and add freestanding ASCs in 2010. The NCHS has merged the NSAS procedures with the NHAMCS. We will conduct a pilot test from August 1 to August 19 to dry run the new forms and instructions before finalizing them for live data collection in the 2009 panel. (The NCHS submitted their request to expand NHAMCS to include ASCs and expects OMB's decision by the end of August.) Copies of the data collection materials that we will use are enclosed.

The Kansas City, Atlanta, and Denver regional offices will each recruit three hospitals with in-house ambulatory surgery centers that are currently in the NHAMCS sample. They will then conduct the two parts of the NHAMCS data collection process. Part 1 is the hospital-level induction interview where we learn about certain features of the hospital and select a sample of ambulatory units (i.e., emergency department, outpatient department clinics, and ASCs) to perform patient record data transcription. Part 2 is an induction interview with the specific ambulatory units selected to sample followed by patient record data collection. This will be limited to an ambulatory surgery center that will complete patient record forms for five to ten patient visits of their choice. Based on past experience, we expect some hospitals to ask for assistance in abstracting data from patients' records. For those hospitals, the field representative will abstract information from records. At the conclusion of the process, the field representative will conduct a short respondent debriefing interview with the ASC contact for information on the quality of the new procedure and suggestions for making this transition successful. A draft copy of the respondent debriefing questionnaire is enclosed.

The Census Bureau field representative will provide the office of each participating hospital with the advance letter enclosed explaining the purpose of the test, the voluntary nature of participation, and the legal authority for collecting the data. A copy of the advance letter is enclosed.

The estimated respondent burden is 60 to 75 minutes per hospital. Thus, the maximum respondent burden for this activity is 12 hours.

Contact persons for questions regarding data collection and analysis of the pretest are listed below:

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