AHRQ Inventory Survey

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is interested in determining the availability of regularly collected administrative data and other data collection initiatives that would provide information to key stakeholders about outpatient health service utilization and episodes of care. Major objectives are to better understand the issues in developing data collection initiatives; redundancies in those initiatives; uses of available data; gaps in available information; similarities across data projects; and areas for collaboration and coordination. AHRQ would like to identify potential strategies to improve synergy across these efforts to better inform health policymakers, clinicians, and consumers.

Econometrica, Inc., a research and policy consulting firm, has been retained by AHRQ to assist the Agency in developing a Data Inventory of existing data collection initiatives and conducting additional data collection, through interviews and surveys of health care organizations that collect, report, or use data on outpatient health service utilization or episodes of care.

You have been identified as a knowledgeable contact person for the data set named below. We hope that you will complete the survey that follows to assist the AHRQ in better understanding the current environment and framework for outpatient health care data collection and identifying potential strategies for improving the potential of this data to inform policymakers and other users. Also, please review the information we have enclosed about the data set and let us know if the information is accurate.

The information you provide will be aggregated with information from other respondents and kept private to the extent permitted by law. However, your specific responses will not be identified separately in any reports nor will any information about your responses be shared with AHRQ or otherwise identified as provided by you. If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact Richard Hilton at rhilton@econometricainc.com.

This survey may be completed by you (or a designee) and returned via e-mail in the next two weeks to ahrqsurvey@econometricainc.com. Alternatively, we will be happy to conduct the survey with you by telephone. If you prefer to be contacted by telephone, please e-mail us at either of the addresses above, with your telephone number and the best time for us to reach you to complete the survey. The survey begins on the next page.

Data set: _____

AHRQ Inventory Survey

Background Information

1. Please indicate which of the following type of organization is your principal employer:

Federal agency: _____

State agency: _____

Provider association: _____

Nonprofit association (other than hospital association): _____

Other (please specify): _____

_____

2. What is your primary responsibility at this organization?

Director/Senior Manager: _____

Data Collection Manager:_____

Database Manager:_____

Data user:_____

Other (please specify):_____

_____

Issues Related to the AHRQ Inventory

First, we would like to ask you questions related to information from your system that will be included in the AHRQ Data Inventory we are developing. We want to confirm that the information is complete and accurate.

3. Have you had a chance to review the information drawn from your database that has been included in the new AHRQ Outpatient Data Inventory?

Yes _____   No _____ (If "No," please review
                                                     the enclosed information before
                                                     moving on to **3a.**)

3a. Is the enclosed information accurate and up to date?

Yes _____   No _____

3b. If the answer to **3a** is "No," please tell us in what way that information needs to be corrected or updated:

_____

_____

_____

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4. How often should AHRQ staff review the information in your database to make sure that your agency's data collection and reporting information presented in its Inventory is accurate, complete, and up to date?

Monthly: _____
Every 3 months: _____
Every 6 Months: _____
Annually: _____
Other (please specify): _____

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5. Are there any plans to significantly expand your health care database(s) in the near term (1 to 3 years)? We are particularly interested regarding any plans to increase the amount and types of data you collect related to outpatient care.

Yes _____   No _____

5a. If "Yes," could you tell us about the plans and when you expect the data element and/or database expansions to be implemented?

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_____

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6. What health care databases or reporting systems on outpatient treatment services and episodes of care are currently maintained by your agency? (Please do not limit your response to what we have already reviewed.)

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_____

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6a. What other data sets are in your data warehouse?

_____

_____

_____

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7. Do you collect ICD-9 diagnosis/procedure codes?

Yes _____   No _____

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8. Does your data system collect any clinical data beyond ICD-9 diagnosis and procedure codes? For example, do you include clinical non-billing elements/measures such as lab results, Present-On-Admission, Do-Not-Resuscitate, birth weight, vital signs, or some other types of clinical outcome descriptors/data elements with your administrative data elements?

Yes _____   No _____

8a. If yes, what other clinical measures (for example, lab results, Present-On-Admission, Do-Not-Resuscitate, birth weight, vital signs, etc.) are collected by your data system? Please be very specific.

_____

_____

_____

8b. Please describe plans for future data collection. Please be very specific.

_____

_____

_____

9. Does your data system regularly collect data on costs incurred for specific outpatient services, third-party reimbursements for those services, and/or revenues associated with those services?

Costs   Yes _____   No _____

Third-party reimbursement   Yes _____   No _____

Revenues   Yes _____   No _____

9a. If yes, could you tell us if these data cover all services in your system, or only a subset of the services?

All services _____

Subset of services _____

9b. Please tell us the types of outpatient services for which you have data on costs borne by service providers? Please be very specific.

_____

_____

_____

9c. If you do not currently include costs, reimbursements, and/or revenues for outpatient services in your data system, is it possible to link your data system with other databases to obtain this information?

Yes _____   No _____

10. Do you have any plans in the near term (1-3 years) to expand the range of data sources that provide input to your database?

Yes _____   No _____

    10a. If "Yes," could you tell us what are these new data sources:

_____

_____

_____

    10b. Will they provide data on outpatient services?

    Yes _____   No _____

    10c. If the answer to **10b** is "Yes," could you tell us of any types of outpatient services these sources will provide that will be different in type from those already available in your current database?

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_____

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11. Is it possible to track individuals by linking a patient's record with other databases using a unique identifier?

Yes _____   No _____

    11a. What unique patient identifiers do you currently collect? (Check all that apply.)

    Social Security No.: _____
    Medicare ID: _____
    Medicaid ID: _____
    SCHIP ID: _____
    Private Insurance ID: _____

Other (please specify): _____

_____

_____

11b. Do you have plans to collect additional unique patient identifiers in the future?

Yes _____   No _____

11c. If "Yes," which ones are likely?

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Do you permit authorized users to access unique patient identifiers through either a Data Use Agreement and/or Institutional Review Board approval in order to link your database with other databases?

Yes _____   No _____

12a. If "No," do you have any plans to institute such a procedure in the near future?

Yes _____   No _____

_____

General Issues Relating to Collection of Outpatient Services and Episodes of Care Data

Thank you very much for completing the first portion of this survey. Now we would like to ask you some more general questions related to the collection and dissemination of outpatient services and episodes of care data.

13. Do you think that current data collection and reporting on outpatient services and episodes of care is sufficient to meet the needs of:

Policymakers?   Yes _____   No _____

Clinicians?   Yes _____   No _____

Consumers?   Yes _____   No _____

If you answered "No" to any of the options above, please indicate why you think current data collection and/or reporting is insufficient:

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. What are the major areas of outpatient health services and episodes of care data collection in which there are currently significant gaps? Please select and describe all the areas in which you consider there to be significant gaps in data collection.

Data for all geographic areas or populations (for example, does claims data reporting exclude the uninsured or small carriers?) (please be specific): _____

_____

_____

_____

Not collected _____   Collected but not available _____

Data for specific types of providers/facilities (for example, excludes Federal hospitals or rural providers) (please be specific): _____

_____

_____

_____

Not collected _____   Collected but not available _____

Data for some types of outpatient services (for example, home health services, physical or occupational therapy, in-home or facility-based dialysis, laboratory services) (please be specific): _____

_____

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_____

Not collected _____   Collected but not available _____

Data for some diagnoses or conditions (for example, encounters for mental health or abortions may be excluded from reporting requirements or suppressed from public releases) (please be specific): _____

_____

_____

_____

Not collected _____   Collected but not available _____

Data for racial/ethnic subgroups (please be specific): _____

_____

_____

_____

Not collected _____   Collected but not available _____

Data available but difficult to access and use (please be specific): _____

_____

_____

_____

Other (please be very specific): _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. Of the current data collection and/or availability gaps, which is the one that deserves the most immediate attention on the part of senior managers and policymakers? (Check only one.)

Data not collected for all geographic areas: _____

Data not collected for specific types of providers/facilities: _____

Data not collected for some types of outpatient services: _____

Data not collected for some diagnoses or conditions: _____

Data not collected for racial/ethnic groups: _____

Data available but difficult to access and use by providers: _____

Data available but difficult to access and use by consumers: _____

Other (please specify): _____

_____

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_____

16. In your opinion, what is the greatest problem or issue that is a barrier to the collection and/or reporting on outpatient services and/or episodes of care? (Check only one.)

Funding for the data system: _____

Compliance with reporting requirements: _____

Variation in data coding and quality across providers and/or payers: _____

Analysis of data: _____

Preparation of useful reports: _____

Consistency of data definitions and coding protocols: _____

Other (please specify): _____

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_____

_____

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17. Are you aware of duplication of data collection efforts among organizations that collect outpatient use and/or episode of care data (if State organization, in your State)?

Yes _____   No _____

Can you give us an example of duplication of data collection efforts (specify)?

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_____

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18. What would be the most important change in data collection you would recommend in order to reduce the burden on providers and health facilities?

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_____

_____

19. Are there other organizations that you work with or coordinate with to develop or disseminate data on outpatient utilization or episodes of care?

Yes _____   No _____

20. How do you coordinate with these other organizations? (Check all that apply.)

Share data: _____
Coordinate data collection: _____
Prepare joint reports: _____
Provide support to users: _____
Other (please specify): _____

_____

_____

_____

21. In your opinion, what is the most important step AHRQ or other Federal agencies could take to improve the amount and quality of outpatient services and episodes of care data?

_____

_____

_____

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. If you find a need to correct or update any information you provided today, please feel free to e-mail the Econometrica project team at rhilton@econometricainc.com.