



Dear Director:

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has embarked on a project to develop a comprehensive inventory of all outpatient health care data collection initiatives. AHRQ is particularly interested in determining the availability of regularly collected administrative and other data collection initiatives about outpatient health service utilization. The major objective of this interest is to better understand issues in developing data collection initiatives, redundancies in these initiatives, uses of available data, gaps in available information, similarities across data projects, and areas for possible collaboration and coordination. AHRQ's initial focus is on those data sets that would inform health care providers, policymakers, and consumers about outpatient health service utilization and episodes of care.

The primary purpose of this information collection is to enhance the information available in the public domain. The results will comprehensively document outpatient health care data collection initiatives at the National level and for each State and the District of Columbia. Information collection is primarily through an e-mail distribution of information we have about the data set, the questionnaire, and a cover letter. The cover letter includes information about the electronic completion and return of the questionnaire. In-depth information about the data set inventory will provide guidance to us on the potential synergy across such initiatives and suggest how the information can inform Federal, State, and local health care policymakers, clinicians, and consumers. We have listed one or more of your data sets in the inventory and would like to enhance the information we have about each data set listed.



Econometrica, Inc., the research and policy consulting firm retained to assist in the development of the inventory, will conduct the information collection. Within the next few weeks, Econometrica will send the survey questionnaire along with information we have about your data set (s) to your office. We are hoping that you will assist us by forwarding each data set description and accompanying questionnaire to the appropriate person for completion.

Thank you in advance for your help with this activity. Please feel free to contact William Encinosa, Ph.D., (William.Encinosa@ahrq.hhs.gov, 301-427-1437) if you should have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn M. Clancy MD".

Carolyn M. Clancy, MD

Director

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality