

Winter 2009

Dear Resident,

Recently we sent a letter notifying you that you have been selected to participate in the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS) about health care use and costs.

MEPS participants provide information about their health care experiences through a series of 5 interviews conducted over a 2½ year period. The interviews are conducted in your home, at a time convenient to you. On average, the interviews take about 2 hours. When you complete each interview, you will receive a \$50 payment to thank you for your time and for keeping records about your family's health care.

This package provides additional information about the study. It includes:

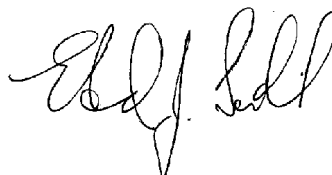
- a short video about MEPS,
- a companion booklet that summarizes the video presentation,
- a monthly planner (calendar) that you can use to keep notes about your health care (these notes, or other available records, can help the interview go more smoothly), and
- a \$5.00 bill for taking the time to review the materials in this package.

Information you give during the interviews is combined with the information gathered from the other selected households to create a comprehensive picture of how people in this country use and pay for their health care. Information collected in this study is considered confidential; without your permission, release of information that would identify a participant is prohibited by law.¹


A MEPS interviewer will be contacting you in the next few weeks to answer any questions you may have about the study. If you would like to speak with a study representative before then, please call Alex Scott at our toll free number: 1-800-945-MEPS (6377). More information is also available at the study web site: <http://www.meps.ahrq.gov>.

Thank you for your help in this important research effort.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Sondik, Ph.D.
 Director
 National Center for Health Statistics
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

 M.D.
 Director
 Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

¹ This survey is authorized under Section 902(a) of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 299a]. The confidentiality of personal information is protected by Federal Statutes, Section 934(c) and Section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 299c-3(c) and 242m(d)] and will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. That law requires that information collected for research conducted or supported by AHRQ that identifies individuals or establishments be used only for the purpose for which it was supplied unless you consent to the use of the information for another purpose.