



Dear:

Your hospital has been selected to participate in the National Hospital Care Survey (NHCS). NHCS is the premier electronic data collection for hospital care and utilization in the U.S. The survey documents the impact of major health-related events (e.g., opioid crisis and COVID-19) on hospitals. Your hospital's participation is crucial to the success of this program! You can find details about NHCS below.

What is NHCS?

NHCS is conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The survey collects critical data (including patient identifiers) via your hospital's electronic health records (EHR) or from Uniform Bill (UB) administrative claims from across inpatient, emergency, and outpatient department settings to produce national statistics on health care. For more information, please visit our website: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhcs/index.htm>.

Why should your hospital participate?

Participation in NHCS is voluntary. You or your staff may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. Success of the study depends on the willingness of hospitals like yours to provide important data. Your participation in the survey is considered a service to the Nation as NHCS data will be used to inform policies to improve the state of health care in the U.S.

In addition, your hospital is offered numerous benefits for participation, including access to the following:

- **Annual Hospital Report (AHR) Portal.** If you submit 12 months of data, the interactive AHR can provide reports that include descriptive statistics for encounters made at your hospital. If patient identifiers are provided, you can also view aggregate post-acute mortality data through linkage to the National Death Index.
- **National Health Care Services Registry.** NHCS is one of the collections working together with the CMS EHR Incentive Programs: Promoting Interoperability (PI) (formerly known as Meaningful Use) and the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS). Registration is free of charge.
- **Compensation.** Your hospital will be compensated for set up and for each year of participation.

Is your hospital's data protected?

Information collected in this study will not be published in any manner that will allow identification of individual hospitals or patients. The Ethics Review Board (ERB) at CDC's NCHS has reviewed and approved all aspects of this study. Please be assured that we are required by law to keep all data regarding patients and facilities strictly confidential and to use these data only for research and statistical purposes. Additional information regarding protections is provided in the enclosed Overview Factsheet.

What's next?

A representative from Westat, the recruitment contractor for NHCS, will contact you soon to discuss how your hospital can participate. For questions, please contact:

- Ms. Kathy Chimes, Westat Project Director for NHCS at 301-251-4302 or chimesk1@westat.com, or
- Mr. Geoffrey Jackson, Team Leader, Hospital Care Team at NCHS at 301-458-4703 or gjackson@cdc.gov.

We look forward to working with you on this crucial data collection effort!

Sincerely,

Brian C. Moyer, PhD, MA
Director, National Center for Health Statistics

You may have questions about your rights as a participant in this research study. If so, please call the National Center for Health Statistics ERB toll-free at 1-800-223-8118. Please leave a brief message with your name and phone number. Say that you are calling about Protocol #2021-01.