

Attachment N1: Health Center Component Outreach Letters:

Introductory, Follow-Up, Refusal Conversion

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Health Statistics



3311 Toledo Road
Hyattsville, Maryland 20782

Dear [Fill Director Name],

Month DD, YYYY

[Fill Health Center Name] has been selected to participate in the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS).

What is NAMCS?

NAMCS is an annual survey of health centers and ambulatory care providers in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics has fielded NAMCS since 1973 and included health centers since 2006. NAMCS data have informed health care providers, researchers, and policy makers about the changing characteristics of ambulatory health care in the United States.



Why should we participate?

The Health Center Component of NAMCS collects critical data (including patient identifiers) via a health center's electronic health records (EHR) system to produce national statistics on health care. To learn more about how these data will be collected and protected, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/namcs/hcc/participant.htm>.

Participation in NAMCS is voluntary. Health centers may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. Your health center and/or its designee's decision to provide EHR data and responses to this survey will be considered your act of consent. Your consent allows de-identified data from your health center to be made available for future research by NCHS or other investigators.

Success of this study depends on the willingness of health centers like yours to provide important data. Benefits for participating include:

- **National description of health care.** Your center may contribute to the national description of health center-based patient care. NAMCS fulfills an ongoing need for national statistics on ambulatory care that can be used to formulate health policy, inform medical practice management, and evaluate quality of care
- **Compensation.** Your health center can receive a set-up fee of up to \$10,000 to assist with the preparation and transmission of patient-level EHR data.
- **Help your family members, friends, and community.** NAMCS data help researchers evaluate current health care practices, assess quality of care, and identify ways to improve health outcomes and equity in our communities.



Is your health center's data protected?

Information collected in this study will not be published in any manner that will allow identification of individual health centers or patients. We intend to conduct additional statistical analysis by linking National Provider Identifiers, Federal Tax Identification Numbers, and Patient identifiers collected in this study to the National Death Index, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development data, and other health-care related data sources. The Ethics Review Board (ERB) at CDC's NCHS has reviewed and approved this study to be in compliance with NCHS Practices and Procedures. 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 statistical purposes as stated by Section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 242m(d)) and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2018 (CIPSEA Pub. L. No. 115-435, 132 Stat. 5529 § 302).



What's next?

A NAMCS representative from the recruitment contractor will contact you soon to discuss how your health center can participate and direct you to complete a 45-minute Facility Interview Questionnaire. If you have any questions, please refer to the frequently asked questions (FAQs) included in this welcome packet. For additional questions please contact us at 1-800-307-0134 or email NAMCSHealthCenters@cdc.gov. We look forward to working with you on this crucial data collection effort.

Sincerely,

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

You may have questions about your rights as a participant in this data collection. 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 #2021-03.



Dear [Fill Director Name],

Your health center has been selected to participate in the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS).

What is NAMCS?

The NAMCS is an annual survey conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), which is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). NCHS recently sent your health center an invitation letter to participate in the Health Center Component of NAMCS. As the Nation's foremost study of the provision and use of ambulatory medical care services, your health center's participation in NAMCS is critical in assessing the impact of ongoing crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the opioid epidemic, and on the provision of medical care services in health centers throughout the United States. The NAMCS Health Center Component will collect critical data (including patient identifiers) via your health center's electronic health record (EHR) system to produce national health care statistics. To learn more, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/namcs/hcc/participant.htm>.

The success of the study depends on the willingness of health centers like yours to provide important data. The NAMCS relies on participation from health centers like yours to produce objective and timely statistics on the Nation's health as well as the performance of the health care system.

Why should we participate?

Benefits of participating include:

- NCHS will offer your health center a set-up fee of up to \$10,000 to help transmit patient-level EHR data.
- Your health center's participation may assist health care providers and professionals in planning for more effective health services, improve medical and health education, and aid the public health community in understanding the patterns of diseases and health conditions.

Participation in NAMCS is voluntary. Health centers may refuse to answer any question or stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. Your health center and/or its designee's decision to provide EHR data and responses to this survey will be considered your act of consent. Consent allows for your de-identified information being made available for future research by NCHS or other investigators. The identifiers collected, such as National Provider Identifiers, Federal Tax Identification Numbers, and patient identifiers, allow additional statistical analyses through linkage to the National Death Index, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development data, and other healthcare related data sources.

Once an authorized health center official decides to participate in NAMCS, they will complete the following steps with a NAMCS representative:

1. **Facility Interview:** This 45-minute survey collects general information about your health center, office visits, and EHR system.
2. **Data Validation and Testing:** After transmitting a test EHR data transmission file, the file will undergo a validation process to ensure that it contains essential data elements and is formatted appropriately. NAMCS representatives will work with you to request any changes to the files.
3. **Electronic Data Transmission:** The last step, after system validation, is transmitting the patient data.

Please contact a NAMCS representative if you have any questions about your health center's participation in the survey by telephone at 1-800-307-0134 (toll-free) or 301-458-4050 (local) or email NAMCSHealthCenters@cdc.gov. A NAMCS representative will follow up with you by telephone.

What to expect?

What to do now?

Information collected in this study will not be published in any manner that will allow identification of individual health centers or patients. The Ethics Review Board (ERB) at CDC's NCHS has reviewed and approved this study to comply with the NCHS Practices and Procedures. Please be assured that we are required by law to keep all data regarding patients and facilities confidential and to use these data only for statistical purposes as stated by Section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 242m(d)) and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2018 (CIPSEA Pub. L. No. 115-435, 132 Stat. 5529 § 302).

Thank you for your help with this important survey. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

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

You may have questions about your rights as a participant in this data collection. 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 #2021-03.



Dear [Fill Director Name],

I am appealing to you to reconsider your decision regarding your participation in the Health Center component of the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS). The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has contacted your health center requesting your participation in NAMCS. The survey will collect critical data via your health center's electronic health records (EHR) system to produce vital national statistics on the provision and use of ambulatory medical care services. To learn more about the survey, please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/namcs/hcc/participant.htm>.

Why should my health center participate?

Participation in NAMCS is voluntary. Health centers may refuse to answer any question or stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. Your health center and/or its designee's decision to provide responses to this survey and EHR data will be considered your health center's act of consent. Consent allows for your de-identified information being made available for future research by NCHS or other investigators. NCHS values your contribution to this study. In return, your health center is eligible to receive a set-up fee of up to \$10,000 to help transmit patient-level EHR data. In addition to the set-up fee, there are many other benefits to participating in NAMCS including the ability to:

- **Help patients.** Policy makers use NAMCS data to ensure medical care is accessible to patients regardless of their background or circumstance.
- **Help physicians.** Professional organizations endorse NAMCS and use its data to inform best practice guidelines for medical care providers.
- **Help other health care providers.** NAMCS data are used to improve training for health care workers, inform medical practice management and evaluate quality of care.
- **Help your family members, friends, and community.** NAMCS data help researchers evaluate current health care practices, assess quality of care, and identify ways to improve health outcomes and health equity in your community.

How does my health center participate?

1. An authorized health center official needs to confirm NAMCS participation.
2. The designated staff member will complete a brief 45-minute Facility Interview Questionnaire (FIQ) to collect general information about the health center, office visits, and the EHR system. A health center staff member will also be designated as responsible for transmitting NAMCS data.
3. Your health center will complete a one-time data testing and validation stage.
4. Your health center will transmit patient-level encounter data directly from your EHR system for a 12-month period.

Is my health center's data protected?

Information collected in this study will not be published in any manner that will allow identification of individual health centers or their patients. Identifiers collected, such as National Provider Identifiers, Federal Tax Identification Numbers, and patient identifiers are being collected to enable linkage to the National Death Index, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development data, and other healthcare related data sources. The Ethics Review Board (ERB) at CDC's NCHS has reviewed and approved this study to comply with the NCHS Practices and Procedures. 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 statistical purposes as stated by Section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 242m(d)) and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2018 (CIPSEA Pub. L. No. 115-435, 132 Stat. 5529 § 302).

What's next?

If you reconsider your decision and wish to participate, please contact your NAMCS representative by telephone at 1-800-307-0134 (toll-free) or 301-458-4050 (local) or email NAMCSHealthCenters@cdc.gov to receive instruction for completing the 45-minute FIQ and arrange for data collection. Thank you for your help with this important survey.

Sincerely,

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

You may have questions about your rights as a participant in this data collection. 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 #2021-03.

SUBJECT: Participation in the 202X National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey

Dear [Health Center Authorized Official],

Thank you for completing the annual data transmission for the 202X National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS). This important data collection effort would not have been possible without your health center's willingness to participate. Your contribution to this study will help researchers, policy makers, and health care providers better understand the state of ambulatory medical care utilization and provision and make data-driven decisions on our nation's public health programs and policy.

Your participation in 202X NAMCS will involve less burden than the previous year. Since your health center participated in the 202X NAMCS, you will only be asked to complete a small subset of questions from the Facility Interview Questionnaire. In addition, the testing and validation (T&V) process is not required this year or for future participation years unless your health center's electronic health record (EHR) system/product has changed or been upgraded since completing T&V in 202X. As a reminder, the 202X annual data transmission deadline is March 31, 202X, allowing your health center to submit EHR data on a schedule that is convenient for your IT/Data Point of Contact (POC). Quarterly data transmissions are preferred, however, NCHS will work with your health center to transmit data in a manner that is convenient for you.

If there have been any changes to your health center's authorized official for this study, EHR system, and/or IT/Data POC, please let us know so that we can update our records and coordinate next steps with the appropriate POC.

Once again, thank you very much for participating last year in the 202X NAMCS, and we look forward to working with you again for the 202X NAMCS! If your health center is unable to participate in 202X NAMCS, please let us know.

If you have any additional questions, please contact the NAMCS Health Center Support Team via email at NAMCSHealthCenters@cdc.gov or by telephone at 1-800-307-0134 (toll-free) or 301-458-4050 (local).

Thank you,

NAMCS Health Center Support Team

National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey
National Center for Health Statistics
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Email: NAMCSHealthCenters@cdc.gov
Contact Numbers: 1-800-307-0134 (toll-free) | 301-458-4050 (local)

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