

User Memorandum 003

To: MCBS Users
From: Andrew Shatto
 Director, Data Development and Services Group
Subject: Update of Select Variables for Cost and Use, Access to Care Files
Date: September 30, 2014
CC: Project Files

This memo is to make you aware of several updates that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has produced for the Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS).

Depression and Dementia Variables

Access to Care RIC2 variables OCPSYCHO and OCDEPRSS for years 2006 – 2010

From 2006 to 2010 if the response for OCPSYCHO and OCDEPRSS was negative and the previous year(s) response was positive a positive response was *NOT* pulled forward as it should have been. This error was corrected, see Table 1.

QUESTION NUMBER	RIC2 VARIABLE	Table 1 QUESTION	YEAR
HFJ30A	OCPSYCHO	(Has/has) a doctor (ever) told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had a mental disorder other than depression?	2006-2010
HFJ30AA	OCDEPRSS	(Has/has) a doctor (ever) told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) have depression?	2006-2010

Cost and Use RIC2 variables

Three questions in the Health Status Questionnaire inquired about multiple diagnoses (see Table 2). These three questions, in varying years (as indicated in Table 2), were divided into separate questions (see Table 3). However, the original Cost and Use (CAU) RIC2 files combined each separated variable back into its respective original variable. This update now provides separate, updated variables for the years affected as indicated in Table 3.

ORIGINAL QUESTION NUMBER	ORIGINAL RIC2 VARIABLE	TABLE 2 ORIGINAL QUESTION	YEAR SEPARATED INTO TWO QUESTIONS
HFJ29	OCALZHMR	(Has/has) a doctor (ever) told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had Alzheimer’s disease or dementia?	2007
HFJ30	OCPSYCH	(Has/has) a doctor (ever) told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had a mental or psychiatric disorder, including depression?	2005
HFJ31	D_PSYCH	Since (TODAY’S DATE) a year ago, did a doctor tell (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had a mental or psychiatric disorder, including depression?	2005

UPDATED QUESTION NUMBER	UPDATED RIC2 VARIABLE	TABLE 3 UPDATED QUESTION	CAU RIC2 AFFECTED YEARS
HFJ29a	OCALZMER	Has a doctor ever told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had Alzheimer's disease?	2007-2009
HFJ29b	OCDEMENT	Has a doctor ever told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had any type of dementia other than Alzheimer's disease?	2007-2009
HFJ30a	OCPSYCHO	(Has/has) a doctor (ever) told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had a mental or psychiatric disorder other than depression?	2005-2008
HFJ31a	D_PSYCHO	Since (TODAY'S DATE) a year ago, did a doctor tell (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had a mental or psychiatric disorder other than depression?	2005-2008
HFJ30aa	OCDEPRSS	Has a doctor ever told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had depression?	2005-2008
HFJ30bb	D_DEPRSS	Since (TODAY'S DATE) a year ago, did a doctor tell (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had depression?	2005-2008

Managed Care Plan Variables

A data anomaly was discovered in the yearly managed care plan variable (D_HMO) and in the monthly variables (D_HMO1 – D_HMO12) that are reported in RIC 4 of the CAU file. These variables use both survey and administrative reported data to identify the survey participant's (SPs) different types of insurance coverage such as a Medicare managed care plan (i.e., Medicare Advantage) or a private managed care plan.

CAU RIC4 data for the period 2006 – 2009 are impacted by this miscoding. The issue was corrected in the 2010 CAU RIC 4 data prior to release.

About the Data Anomaly

CAU RIC 4 data for years 2006-2009 erroneously allocated a significant proportion of SPs with Medicare managed care plans as having a private plan, or more often, having both a private plan and a Medicare plan. Table 4 illustrates the original error in allocating SPs with Medicare managed care by comparing the corrected (un-weighted) frequencies for the D_HMO variable (2009 CAU RIC4) with the original.

Table 4. D_HMO Un-Weighted Frequency for 2009 CAU RIC4		Frequency	
Value	Label	Corrected	Original
0	No Coverage	6,731	6,731
1	Private Coverage	834	1,357
2	Medicare Coverage	3,028	357
3	Both Medicare and Private Coverage	266	2,414

Additional Variables Affected by the Anomaly

There are a number of other variables that were also affected by the incorrect allocation of the D_HMO variables. These are variables that report on various attributes of the Managed Care policies. The additional affected variables and the years impacted are listed in Table 5.

Variables	Title	Years Impacted
D_TYPPL1 - D_TYPPL5	Type of Plan	2006-2009
D_PHREL1 - D_PHREL5	Policy Holder Relationship	2006-2009
D_COVNM1 – D_COVNM5	Number of Family Members Covered	2006-2009
D_COVRX1 – D_COVRX5	Does Plan Cover Prescribed Medicines	2006-2009
D_COVNH1 – D_COVNH5	Does Plan Cover Stay in Nursing Home	2006-2009
D_PAYSP1 – D_PAYSP5	MIP Pay Any/All Cost for Plan	2006-2009

New Variables added to Cost and Use RIC4, 2006 - 2010

Thirteen new variables have been added to CAU RIC 4 for 2006 – 2009 as well as for 2010. These variables identify the data source for the Medicare Advantage plan for the year (MA_SRC) as well as for each month (MA_SRC1 - MA_SRC12). The values for these new variables are presented in table 6.

Value	Label
0	No Coverage
1	Survey Data Only
2	CMS Administrative Data Only
3	Both Survey and Administrative Data

Re-Release of 2010, 2011, and 2012 RIC2 Files

Beginning with the Access 2010 RIC2, a decline in the number of people reporting paralysis (OCPPARAL) and broken hip (OCBRKHIP) was found. It appears that previously this variable was programmed in a cumulative fashion, pulling forward positive responses from prior rounds. Beginning in 2010, the variable was taken directly from responses for the current round only. Steps were taken to fix this programming error in 2010 and 2011, see Table 7.

Also beginning in the Access 2010 RIC2, the variables EMCAUSC1 and EMCAUSC2 did not properly capture the response of those SPs who gained entitlement to Medicare due to turning age 65. Previously, these responses were ‘missing’. Steps were taken to fix this error and these SPs are now in the ‘Gained entitlement at 65’ bracket. This correction applies to the 2010, 2011, and 2012 files, see Table 7.

QUESTION NUMBER	RIC2 VARIABLE	Table 7 QUESTION	YEAR
HFJ37	OCPPARAL	(Has/has) a doctor (ever) told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had complete or partial paralysis?	2010-2011
HFJ33	OCBRKHIP	(Has/has) a doctor (ever) told (you/SP) that (you/he/she) had a broken hip?	2010-2011
HFJ43	EMCAUSC1 EMCAUSC2	What was the original cause of [your/(SP's)] becoming eligible for Medicare?	2010-2012

Re-Release of 2010 RIC2P Files

A skip pattern changed for the variable DIAKDPRB in the Access 2010 RIC2P. Corrections have been made to this variable and no other years are effected, see Table 8.

QUESTION NUMBER	RIC2 VARIABLE	Table 8 QUESTION	YEAR
HFP16	DIAKDPRB	(Do you/Does SP) currently have any problems with (your/his/her) kidneys as a result of (your/his/her) diabetes?	2010

Corrected Data Now Available

MCBS Users who have a current DUA and had purchased data for the affected years may request corrected versions of the MCBS data, free of charge. Please send requests for updated files to mcbs@cms.hhs.gov with "MCBS Updates (September 30, 2014)" referenced in the subject line and your DUA number and years of files needed listed in the email.

On behalf of MCBS staff, we apologize for any inconvenience this issue may have caused and thank our users for continuing to provide valuable feedback on the MCBS survey and data products. If you have questions related to these issues please contact The CMS Research Assistance Data Center (ResDAC) at resdac@umn.edu or 1-888-9RESDAC