

MCBS Summary Tables Methodology

DATA AND METHODS

This Technical Appendix provides information about the production of the estimates and margins of error (MOEs) presented in Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS) Public Use Files (PUFs).

MCBS is a nationally representative, longitudinal survey of Medicare beneficiaries sponsored by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and directed by the Office of Enterprise Data and Analytics (OEDA). The MCBS is the most comprehensive and complete survey available on the Medicare population and is essential in capturing data not otherwise collected through operations and administration of the Medicare program.

Unless otherwise noted, the universe for each PUF includes Medicare beneficiaries who completed a Community interview and answered questions themselves or by proxy. "Don't know" and "Refused" responses were treated as missing values and excluded from both the numerator and denominator in measure calculation.

The Survey File ever enrolled weights were used to produce estimates that represent the population that was ever enrolled in Medicare for any period during the data year. Estimates generated using data from Topical segments used special non-response adjustment weights. Balanced repeated replication survey weights were used to account for the complex sample design.

Estimate suppression is used to protect the confidentiality of Medicare beneficiaries by avoiding the release of information that can be used to identify individual beneficiaries. Estimates with a denominator of less than 50 sample persons or with a numerator of zero sample persons are suppressed. In addition, some estimates are suppressed because they do not meet minimum criteria for reliability. For the proportions in these tables, the Clopper-Pearson method was used to compute confidence intervals for each estimate. Estimates with a confidence interval whose absolute width is at least 0.30, with a confidence interval whose absolute width is no greater than 0.05, or with a relative confidence interval width of more than 130 percent of the estimate are suppressed.¹ For other estimates such as medians, relative standard errors (RSEs) are calculated as the standard error of the estimate divided by the estimate itself. Estimates with an RSE of greater than 30 percent are suppressed because they do not meet the standards of reliability or precision.

¹ Parker, Jennifer D., Makram Talih, Donald J., Malec, et al. "National Center for Health Statistics Data Presentation Standards for Proportions." National Center for Health Statistics. *Vital Health Stat* 2, no. 175 (2017). Available from: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_02/sr02_175.pdf.

MCBS Limited Data Sets (LDS) are available to researchers with a data use agreement. Information on ordering MCBS files from CMS can be obtained through the [CMS LDS website](#). MCBS Microdata PUFs and MCBS data products are available to the public as free downloads and can be found through <https://data.cms.gov>.

For details about the MCBS sample design, survey operations, and data files, please see the *MCBS Methodology Report*, *Data User's Guides*, and *Data Year Release Notes* available on the [CMS MCBS website](#).

The MCBS is authorized by section 1875 (42 USC 139511) of the Social Security Act and is conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The OMB Number for this survey is 0938-0568.

Additional technical questions concerning this and other MCBS data products may be directed to: MCBS@cms.hhs.gov.