

Hearing on Minimum Data Standards for the Measurement of Socioeconomic Status in Federal Health Surveys

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Populations Subcommittee

Hearing on Socioeconomic Status

March 8 – 9, 2012

Workshop Background

- Affordable Care Act, Section 4302 required the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish Data Standards for the collection and reporting of:
 - Race
 - Ethnicity
 - Sex
 - Primary Language
 - Disability Status

ACA Data Standard Requirements

- Must be developed within two years
- Compliance with existing OMB standards
- Measures are for self-reported or knowledgeable proxy
- For use by any federally conducted or supported health care survey
 - To the extent practicable
 - Subject to appropriations

Standards Development

- **HHS Data Council** charged with drafting recommendations for data standards
- Guided by existing federal data standards
- Demonstrated to work well in national surveys
- Development conducted in consultation with statistical agencies and programs
- Formal solicitation of public comments

Implementation of Standards

- Adopted by the Secretary, October 31, 2011
- Applies to new HHS population surveys
- Existing surveys will implement standards when undergoing revision or OMB review
- Information on data standards, development process and rationale are available at:

<http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/section4302/>

ACA Section 4302 – Additional Data

- Authority is provided under Section 4302 for additional data collection and standards
- Any federally conducted or supported health survey shall collect and report, to the extent practicable:

Any other demographic data as deemed appropriate by the Secretary regarding health disparities.

HHS has asked NCVHS to review SES data collection in federal surveys, and make recommendations for SES data collection in HHS

Purpose of Hearing

- Examine the collection of socioeconomic status (SES) in federal health surveys
- Triumvirate: **Income, Education and Occupation**
- Explore the uses of information on SES
- Describe measures and best practices for collecting information on SES on surveys
- Provide recommendations for the collection of SES on HHS national population health surveys
- Consider a '**minimum standard**' for surveys

Measurement of Socioeconomic Status (SES)

- SES is a Derived Measure
 - Surveys measure its parts, not the concept itself
- Standard Components in the Measurement of SES
 - Income
 - Occupation
 - Education

Income

- Differences in measurement across surveys
- Individual vs household/single & combined
- Poverty vs SES
- Wealth
- What is needed to improve response rate/public role
- Linkages (what produces health that is linked to income)

Education

- Different approaches to measurement
- Educational attainment vs. education
- Education and social stratification
- Capturing new forms of educational attainment-certificates
- Changes in thinking about educational achievement
- Innovation in linkages

Occupation

- Picking up changes in employment/jobs
- Coding of occupations
 - Using occupational data for social status and prestige indicator
 - Imputation of occupations
 - Linkages

Framework of the hearing

- **Short Term**, Long Term and Dynamic Indicators of SES
- **Short Term**
 - Individual /Family
 - Income
 - Educational attainment/Education
 - Occupation/industry

Workshop Questions

- How is socioeconomic status defined?
- What are the current data elements and indicators?
- What are the best practices for collecting SES data?
- How does the federal government use survey measures of SES?
- What are the important measurement and methodological issues for collecting SES?
- How do we apply a standard or harmonized measure of SES on national surveys (e.g., how SES relates to survey purpose, burden of new questions, etc.)?
- Recommendations and future considerations

Workshop Goals

- Review current measurement of SES in existing HHS surveys and what we learn from them
- Identify best practices for the measurement of SES in national health surveys
- Identify minimum standards that could be applied across a variety of survey mechanisms and populations
- Identify short term and long term goals in measurement of SES – moving from SES to SEP

Structure of the letter (TBD)

- Background on the relationship of SES to health
- Perspectives on the short term, longer term and dynamic measures of SES
- Focus in this report on a subset of the short term measures for the development of a minimum standard
 - standards that exist in the measurement of SES

Structure of the Letter (cont'd)

- Use/usage of SES and for what purposes by federal agencies
- Identify policy gaps and how SES is a part of policy drivers in some federal surveys
- Data quality and gaps
 - Longer term and dynamic
 - Linkages

Major HHS Surveys - SES

- National Health Interview Survey
- Medical Expenditure Panel Survey
- National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
- National Survey of Drug Use and Health
- National Survey of Family Growth
- State and Local Area Integrated Telephone Survey
- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System
- Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey

Other Federal Surveys - SES

- American Community Survey
- Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement
- Survey of Income and Program Participation
- Panel Study of Income Dynamics
- American Housing Survey
- New Immigrant Survey

Timeline and Goals

- Conduct SES Workshop March 8-9, 2012
- Draft descriptive report of current federal survey methods and measurement of SES
- Convene Online presentations April, 2012 to fill in needed areas
- May, 2012 Prepare draft report for the **June, 2012 NCVHS meeting** with findings and recommendations

Future Considerations (Later Proposal To Populations Subcommittee)

- Long Term and Dynamic Metrics for Measurement of SES and Innovative Linkages
- SES in Administrative Records
- SES in EHR's

Planning Committee

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