

2010 Comprehensive Revision

In 2010 the National Health Statistics Group will undertake a comprehensive revision or “benchmark” revision. The purpose of this exercise is to incorporate any needed changes into the National Health Expenditure Accounts (NHEA). These changes include revisions to data, methodology, processing, and definitions as well as conceptual changes which will be incorporated into the estimates. This periodic review of the NHEA helps ensure that its concepts, definitions, and data are current.

One of the major data sources used in the NHEA is the quinquennial Economic Census¹. The benchmark revisions are timed to occur every five years when the Economic Census is released and is available for incorporation into the accounts. Minor changes to the estimates are made on an on-going basis.

For the 2010 benchmark we will investigate the following issues:

Conceptual Issues

- **Boundary of health care issues:** An investigation of where to draw the boundaries between health care and the rest of the economy, including looking at the line between health care and aid in daily living in the long term care sector.
- **Conceptual foundation of NHEA:** An exploration of the classification of expenditures incurred when a public program subsidizes a non-public benefit.
- **Import and Export of health care:** A development of a definition and measurement of purchases of medical care by foreign visitors and the purchases of medical services abroad by US citizens (medical tourism).

Definitional Issues

- **Industrial Inplant:** A study of what is included in the industrial inplant sector and how it is measured.
- **School Health:** A review of the definition, scope and methodology used to estimate school health.
- **Other non-durables:** An investigation of the scope of this category.
- **Nursing Homes:** An investigation of whether Residential Treatment Centers for Mental Health and Substance Abuse (NAIC 62322) should be included in the nursing home estimates.
- **Administrative spending:** A development of refined definitions of public and private administrative costs, including how we report administrative costs, especially the public support of private enterprises.

¹ U.S Bureau of the Census, 2007 Economic Census. <http://www.census.gov/econ/census07/>

Data Revisions and Development

- **Vocational Rehabilitation:** A review of methodology, data and service distributions.
- **Medical Transportation:** A development of an estimate for public medical transportation.
- **Medicaid/SCHIP:** A development of an improved methodology for distributing managed care funds among services, and development of estimates for durable medical products.
- **Factors Accounting for Growth/personal health care price index:** An ongoing project to reevaluate the price indexes used to develop real personal health care spending.
- **Other:** A review all estimates to ensure that the most recent data is being used and develop other data sources as necessary.

Methodology

- **Medicaid/SCHIP:** Review current methodology.
- **PHI:** Review current methodology and data sources.
- **Nursing Homes:** Develop estimates of State and local subsidies.
- **Prescription Drugs:** Review methodology for developing public and private estimates, estimating co-payment structures, and estimating the average price of brand and generic medications.

In the past we have held several benchmark conferences to receive input from users of our data.² This year we are requesting input via e-mail or through visits to our website. We would like to hear from you about other issues that might be important to examine. Please e-mail us at cathy.cowan@cms.hhs.gov .

² Results from the latest conferences were published in the Fall 2006 edition of the Health Care Financing Review (<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/HealthCareFinancingReview/PastArticles/list.asp?filtertype=dual&datefiltertype=-1&datefilterinterval=&filtertype=data&datafiltertype=3&datafiltervalue=2006+Fall&keyword=&intNumPerPage=10&cmdFilterList=Show+Items>) Additional papers are available on the CMS website at (http://www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalHealthExpendData/07_NHEA%20Related%20Studies.asp#TopOfPage)