Launched in 2006, the NORC Data Enclave provides a confidential, protected environment in which authorized researchers and power analysts can securely store, access, and analyze sensitive microdata remotely. Our team has since become the preferred hosting and analytics partner for both public and private organizations that require cutting-edge data security options, research computing technologies, and advanced analytics support.

Located within a leading research organization, NORC at the University of Chicago, the Data Enclave offers the full cycle of data services, from specialized big data services to large-scale data warehouses to such research-oriented services as survey data analysis, study design and concept, and data archiving. NORC has expertise in metadata documentation and data dissemination, and experience working in the health care, education, and social research industries, among others.
NORC at the University of Chicago is an independent research institution that delivers reliable data and rigorous analysis to guide critical programmatic, business, and policy decisions. Since 1941, NORC has conducted groundbreaking studies, created and applied innovative methods and tools, and advanced principles of scientific integrity and collaboration. Today, government, corporate, and nonprofit clients around the world partner with NORC to transform increasingly complex information into useful knowledge.

NORC conducts research in five main areas: Economics, Markets, and the Workforce; Education, Training, and Learning; Global Development; Health and Well-Being; and Society, Media, and Public Affairs. Our comprehensive and integrated services span the research cycle.

Medicare and Commercial Data All in One Place

Until recently, there has been a lack of timely, detailed information to track the components of national commercial health care spending, support analysis of underlying cost drivers, and explore the reasons for cost and spending variations across the country. To remedy this, the Health Care Cost Institute began making the health care claims of more than 50 million privately insured Americans available to academic partners and authorized researchers around the United States through the NORC Data Enclave.

Making Health Care Costs Transparent

The NORC Data Enclave and the Human Services Research Institute help states develop or improve their All-Payer Claims Databases, large-scale databases that systematically collect medical claims, eligibility, and provider files. Payers upload data to a Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant data center. A computing and analytics platform enables the general public to make queries online and download results and reports based on customizable parameters.

Comparative Effectiveness Research on Medicare Claims Data

NORC partnered with IMPAQ International and Buccaneer Computer Systems and Service to conduct the Comparative Effectiveness Research (CER) Public Use Data Pilot Project. The project pioneered the creation, dissemination, and support of Medicare claims public use files (PUF) to conduct comparative effectiveness research. The final data products for this project include Basic, Enhanced, and Linked PUF for a 5 percent sample of Medicare beneficiaries across three years of data using all nine Medicare claims limited datasets.

Securely Sharing CMS Medicare Data

In support of CMS’s Medicare Program “Availability of Medicare Data for Performance Measurement,” NORC Data Enclave experts joined IMPAQ International, the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), and General Dynamics in implementing the Qualified Entity Certification Program (QECP) for Medicare Data. Section 10332 of the Affordable Care Act requires that standardized extracts of Medicare claims data under parts A, B, and D be made available to “qualified entities.” This groundbreaking provision of the Affordable Care Act permits, for the first time, the disclosure of Medicare claims data for the creation of health care provider and supplier report cards.

NORC and Health Care Cost Institute’s Claims Data Dissemination Partnership

Fellow nonprofit organizations NORC and HCCI have missions and values that align very closely, i.e., advancing research and decisions that affect health care spending, quality, and cost. This initiative will track episodes of care and identify trends in new and novel ways. The focus of this endeavor is to take the ambiguity out of the health care arena, monitor emerging trends, and foster cost and price transparency.

Start a conversation. Contact us.

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