

Implementing Medical Care Surveys Using DEP and Manipula

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The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) sponsors the National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NHAMCS) and the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS). These surveys collect information about the health problems of ambulatory patients and the treatment given to them. While the NHAMCS collects this data from hospital emergency rooms and outpatient departments, the NAMCS collects the data from office-based physicians.

Both the NAMCS and the NHAMCS have two phases of data collection. The first phase of data collection involves an “induction” interview that collects information about a physician’s practice in the NAMCS and the services offered by either a freestanding ambulatory surgery center or the various departments of a hospital in the NHAMCS. In the induction phase, the instruments sample either physician’s practices for NAMCS or the various eligible departments for NHAMCS. The second phase of data collection is the “abstraction” interview which collects patient information in the Patient Record Form (PRF) section of the abstraction instruments. These Patient Record Forms can have up to one hundred records.

Both surveys collect similar data and have similar functionality. This paper will discuss four key features that the NAMCS/NHAMCS instruments have in common. These are:

- The instruments extensive use of Manipula to aid data collection in different areas of the instruments.
- The customization of Blaise Mode Library layout to mimic the paper PRFs.
- The requirements for navigation within and between the PRF forms and having the forms look and feel the same across the two survey types.
- The use of parallel blocks and tabs to separate data collection groups