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Access to Medicare Claims Data Increased With Release of the Data Entrepreneurs' Synthetic Public Use File (DE-SynPUF) by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

New data file created by NORC at the University of Chicago and IMPAQ International

2/12/2013, Bethesda, MD. - Today, CMS released the Data Entrepreneurs' Synthetic Public Use File ([DE-SynPUF](#)) to be used by data entrepreneurs for writing programs and developing applications or research protocols that can be applied to CMS claims data. This public release will aid entrepreneurs and researchers in understanding the complexity and abundance of information in these data. The DE-SynPUF was a joint project of NORC at the University of Chicago and IMPAQ International, a Maryland-based research, evaluation and technical assistance firm.

"This represents a step forward in increasing access to Medicare claims data," Said Michael Davern, Senior Vice President with the Public Health department at NORC at the University of Chicago. "With access to this information, data entrepreneurs will be able to develop applications and software that will enhance the quality of care for Medicare recipients and researchers will be able use the file for training purposes."

The files in the DE-SynPUF preserve the detailed data structure of key variables at both the beneficiary and claim levels while maintaining the highest level of protection for health information. All variables in the *DE-SynPUF* are imputed, suppressed, and coarsened as part of disclosure treatment. As a result, the *DE-SynPUF* has very limited inferential research utility because of the synthetic process used to generate the data.

The *DE-SynPUF* is based from a 5% sample of enrolled Medicare beneficiaries in 2008. It includes three years of claims (2008, 2009, and 2010) for the beneficiaries and four types of claims (Inpatient, Outpatient, Carrier, PDE – Prescription Drug Event) in addition to a beneficiary summary file for each year.

For more information please go to: <http://go.cms.gov/SynPUFs>



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About NORC at the University of Chicago

NORC at the University of Chicago is an independent research organization with more than 70 years of leadership and experience in data collection, analysis, and dissemination. NORC supports a national

field staff and international research operations collaborating with governments, educational and nonprofit organizations, and businesses to provide data and analysis that support informed decision making in health, education, economics, crime, justice, energy, security, and the environment.



About IMPAQ International

IMPAQ International, LLC, is premier research, evaluation and technical assistance firm collaborating with the public and private sectors to tackle important issues and develop policies and programs that improve the lives of millions. With offices in Columbia, MD, and Washington, DC, the firm's services include: impact evaluations; survey research and data collection; applied research; process evaluation; qualitative research; quantitative data analysis; and technical assistance - all of which enable IMPAQ's clients to measure and evaluate the real-life impact of their decisions.