

March 14, 2008

## **Notes to accompany 1968 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) public use file release**

The Division of Health Interview Statistics (DHIS) conducted an extensive, but non-exhaustive, review of the 1968 NHIS data prior to this release. The record layouts contain a number of footnotes that should be studied carefully by data file users. We found that a number of variables contained data only for limited time periods, due to changes in the NHIS questionnaire and/or processing, and we documented this whenever we detected it. Data users that are interested in a particular variable are encouraged to create and examine tabulations of the variable for different time periods and by questionnaire type (identified by the fiscal year variable, col. 108) prior to conducting analyses.

### Duplicate records

The original fiscal year files included duplicates: condition (4 out of 114,924), hospital (7 out of 17,927), doctor visit (150 out of 145,288). The original calendar year files included duplicates as well: condition (4 out of 88,090), doctor visit (133 out of 138,617). The duplicates are not included in the public use files.

### Corrupted records

There were 24 identical corrupt records (thus, 23 duplicates) in the original fiscal year doctor visit file. All 24 corrupt records were removed. It was possible to replace 18 of these records using the calendar year doctor visit file for the time period (January-June 1968) where the two files overlap; the other 6 are no longer available.

### Differences between fiscal, calendar year files

In general, corresponding fiscal and calendar year files contain the same data items in the same locations. The exceptions are: (1) the calendar year doctor visit file, which has 3 variables in positions where the fiscal year file is blank (cols. 55, 143, 148), and (2) the calendar year hospital file, which has 1 variable in a position where the fiscal year file is blank (col. 104).

### Transition to "processing year"

NHIS transitioned to the "processing year" concept during 1968. As a result, there are records for the first two weeks of 1969 in the calendar 1968 files, and records for the first two weeks of July 1968 in the fiscal 1968 files.