

2018 Adult Functioning and Disability Section (AFD)

Supplemental Questions

The Adult Functioning and Disability supplement (AFD) fielded as part of the 2018 NHIS Sample Adult module is part of an international project to develop and test improved measures of functioning. Questions are asked about sample adults' functioning in various basic and complex activity domains: vision (difficulty seeing), hearing (difficulty hearing), mobility (difficulty walking, climbing steps, or moving around), communication (difficulty communicating), cognition (difficulty remembering or concentrating), upper body (difficulty with self-care), affect (feelings of being worried, nervous, or anxious; feelings of being depressed), pain, and fatigue (feelings of being very tired or exhausted). Follow-up questions on the degree of difficulty, use of assistive devices, and functioning with assistance were included for most domains. More information on the international project and the questions used in this supplement can be found on the NCHS website at:

https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/washington_group/wg_questions.htm.

In 2018, all sample adults (n = 25,417) received the 2018 AFD supplement. Persons who did not give responses to any of the questions in the section were given a coded value of "1" on the record completion status variable in the data file (variable RCS_AFD), which indicates that their record only contains responses of "not ascertained." These persons are retained in the file, but they are coded as "8" in all remaining relevant fields of the AFD file. Adults who met the criteria for completing the section were coded as either "2" (all answers were "refused" or "don't know"), "3" (all answers were "refused," "don't know," or "not ascertained"), or "4" (at least one valid answer) on RCS_AFD. In 2018, over 97% of AFD sample adults are coded "4" on RCS_AFD.

Because the AFD supplement was administered to all sample adults for 2018, it is included in the Sample Adult File, and the sample adult weight, WTFA_SA, should be used to produce estimates for variables in the supplement. In previous years where the AFD supplement was only administered to one-half or one-quarter of all sample adults, different weights (WTFA_AFD) were generated for sample adults in the AFD File. In addition, during those previous years, a separate, stand-alone public use file was created for the AFD variables, rather than appending these variables to the Sample Adult File.

Technical Notes

The 2018 AFD supplement is very comparable to previous AFD supplements in terms of the questions asked on the NHIS instruments, with a couple of exceptions. First, the 2012-2018 AFD instruments contained fewer detailed follow-up questions than the 2011 AFD instrument, which in turn contained fewer detailed follow-up questions than the first supplement in 2010, the Quality of Life (QOL) supplement. Thus, analysts interested in combining years of data should read the notes in the Variable Layout Report, which provide information regarding the comparability of 2018 variables relative to variables in the 2012–2017 AFD files, in the 2011 AFD file, and in the 2010 QOL file. Second, the Family Disability Questions (FDB) supplement released from 2009–2017 was not included in the 2018 NHIS. Two questions from that supplement, PDFCAUSE and PDFSPEC, were moved to AFD for 2018 and renamed COGCAUSE and COGSPEC. Users should also be aware that only one-quarter of sample adults were selected to receive the 2010 QOL and 2012 AFD supplements, whereas one-half of sample adults were selected to receive the 2011 and 2013-2017 AFD supplements.