

Date

Full name
Street address
City, State, Zip

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is conducting the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS). This annual study, which has been in the field since 1973, collects information about the large portion of ambulatory care provided by physicians and mid-level providers throughout the United States. Research utilizing the NAMCS helps to inform physicians, health care researchers, and policy makers about the changing characteristics of ambulatory health care in this country. In addition to the regular sample of physicians, the NAMCS is once again specifically sampling providers from a national sample of community health centers.

Your center has been selected and we are requesting a short interview (approximately 20 minutes) with you to obtain information that would allow us to sample three physicians or mid-level providers in your health center. From these providers we will collect (1) information from a sample of patient visits (e.g., demographics, diagnoses, services, and treatments); and (2) provider demographic and practice characteristics.

Many organizations and leaders in the health care community, including those providing the enclosed letter of endorsement, have expressed their support and join me in urging your participation in this meaningful study. Participation is voluntary, and you or your staff may refuse to answer any question or may stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. The following are some key points about the survey:

- Data collection for the NAMCS is authorized by Section 306 of the Public Health Service Act (Title 42, U.S. Code, 242k).
- All information collected will be held in confidence according to Section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42, U.S. Code, 242m(d)) and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (Title 5 of PL 107-347). The selected providers' name may be used by NCHS for matching purposes to minimize the possibility of sampling in future years and to reduce the paperwork burden on the provider. No patient names, social security numbers or addresses are collected.
- This study conforms to the Privacy Rule as mandated by HIPAA, because disclosure of patient data is permitted for public health purposes, and the NCHS Research Ethics Review Board has approved NAMCS.
- U.S. Census Bureau employees, who administer the study, have taken an oath to abide by Title 13, U.S. Code, Section 9, which requires them to keep all information about your practice and patients confidential.

A representative of the Census Bureau, acting as our agent, will be calling you to schedule an appointment regarding the details of your participation. If you have any questions regarding your participation, please call a NAMCS representative at (800) 392-2862. Additional information on the survey may be obtained by visiting the NAMCS participant Web site at www.cdc.gov/namcs. We greatly appreciate your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Sondik, Ph.D.
Director

Enclosures