Vital Records 101

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NAPHSIS

Protecting Personal Identity
Promoting Public Health

What are Vital Records?

Permanent legal records of vital events:

Births

Deaths

Fetal deaths

Marriages

Divorces

Responsibility for Vital Records

- State (not federal) responsibility
- 57 vital records jurisdictions:

  50 states + DC + NYC + 5 territories
- Jurisdiction where event occurs

  (not place of residence)

History of Vital Records in U.S.

Colonial: Legal documents to protect individual property rights

18th-19th century: Large city epidemics

Late 1800's: Foundation for public health

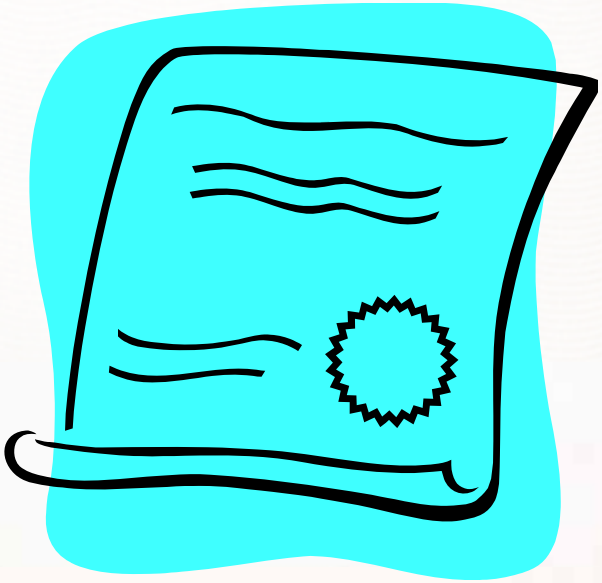
1935: All states meet minimum standards

1950-present: Expanding public health and research needs

Major Uses of Vital Records

Public health statistics/research

Legal and administrative



Public Health and Research Uses

- Identify risk factors
- Measure health outcomes
- Plan/evaluate programs
- Conduct medical research
- Calculate natural increase (population growth)

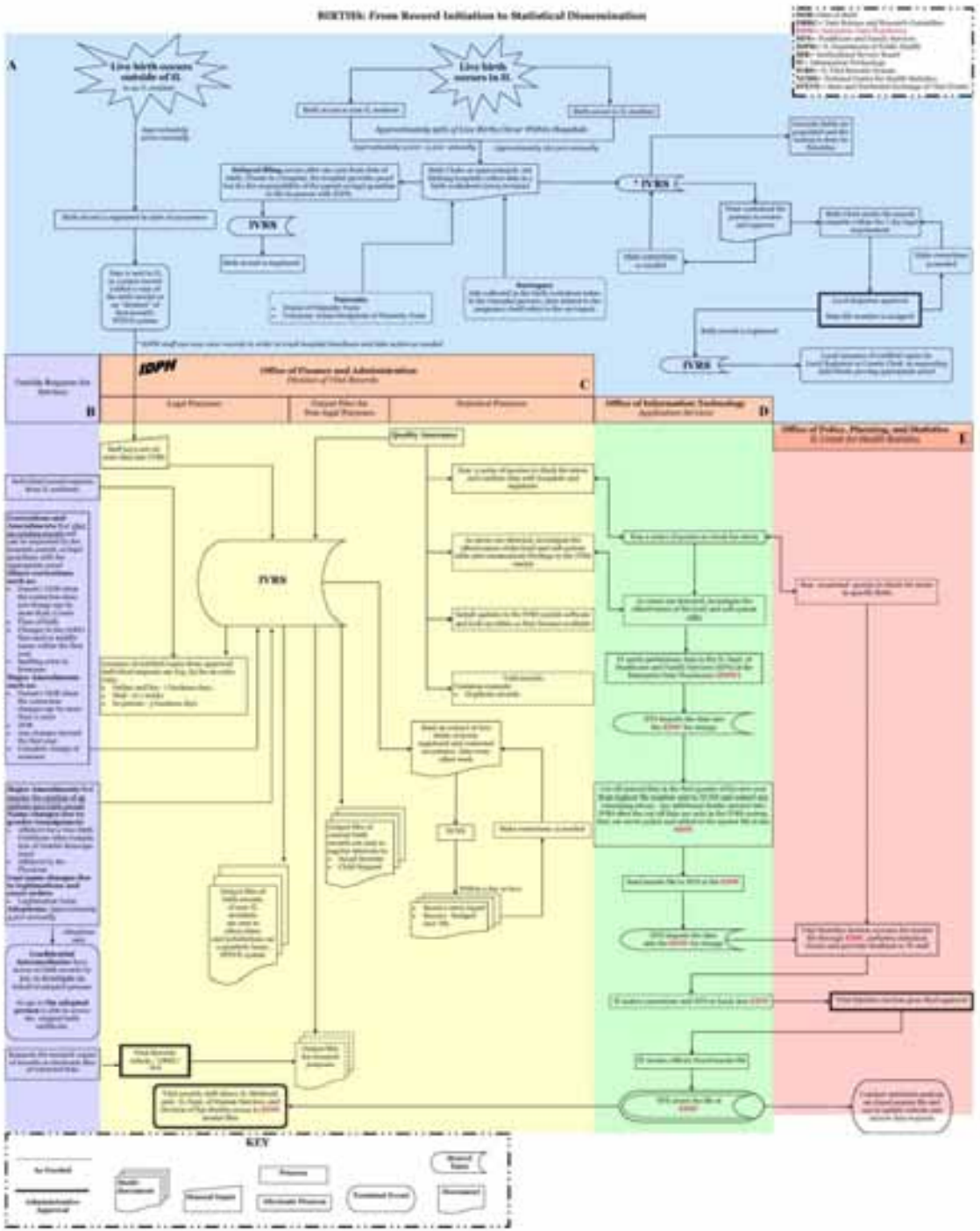
Legal and Administrative Purposes

- Proof of age, citizenship, parentage
- Obtain identity documents (passport, DL)
- Enroll in benefits programs
- Settle estates & obtain life insurance payouts
- Terminate benefits (social security, pension)

How Are Vital Records Processed?

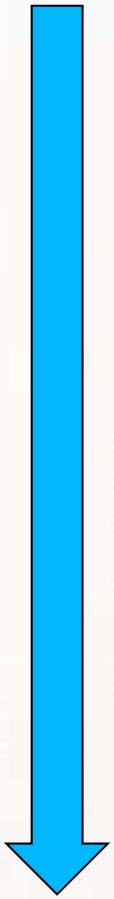
- Most jurisdictions use electronic systems
  - EBRS - birth
  - EDRS - death
  - EVVE - verification
  - STEVE - state/territorial exchange

- Complex: many steps and many actors


BIRTHS: From Record Initiation to Statistical Dissemination
Live birth occurs outside of H.
Live birth occurs in H.
IVRS
Office of Finance and Administration
Legal Process
Statistical Process
Office of Information Technology
Office of Policy, Planning, and Statistics
IVRS
KEY

Birth Registration Data Flow

1. Birth occurs
2. Hospital reports to vital records office (VRO)
3. VRO reviews data for quality
   - If needed, VRO follows up with hospital
4. VRO shares data with mother's state of residence
5. VRO submits birth data to NCHS
6. NCHS reviews data for quality
   - If needed, NCHS follows up with VRO
   - If needed, VRO follows up with hospital
7. VRO submits final complete year end data to NCHS
8. NCHS conducts final data quality review
   - If needed, NCHS follows up with VRO
   - If needed, VRO follows up with hospital
9. VRO/NCHS each release aggregate vital statistics data



Death Registration Data Flow

- Funeral home reports decedent's demographic data
- Attending physician certifies and natural causes of death
- Medical examiner/coroner certifies and reports external causes and unknown manner or unattended death
- <u>Same process as birth; more data sources</u>

Federal Partners

National Center for Health Statistics (CDC)

- Vital Statistics Cooperative Program
- National Death Index

Social Security Administration

- Enumeration at Birth
- Fact of Death

EVVE Users

- Office of Personnel Management
- Department of State
- SSA
- Other government users

Vital Records Improvements Needed

- Enhance **data quality**
  - Feedback to data sources
  - Training of data providers
- Improve **timeliness**
  - Fewer jurisdictions using paper or hybrid systems
  - Increased physician adoption of EDRS

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BETTER FASTER

Strategies for Improving the Timeliness of Vital Statistics

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