



## Cooperative Agreement Corner



Our Cooperative Agreement with the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) supports activities for jurisdictions. Upcoming opportunities are provided below.

### **Systems Special Interest Group**

Past topics have included electronic signatures for vital records documents, out of state records, e-certification and more. The next Systems Special Interest Group Call will be taking place on August 24<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. Eastern. Email [hq@naphsis.org](mailto:hq@naphsis.org) to join.

### **Field Services Special Interest Group**

Past topics have included mother/parent worksheets, working with the funeral director community, retention schedules and more. The next Field Services Interest Group Call will be taking place on August 26<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. Eastern. Email [hq@naphsis.org](mailto:hq@naphsis.org) to join.

### **2021 Mortality Completeness**

NCHS typically calculates each jurisdiction's file completeness by comparing current volume with the volume from the previous data year. Because of the high number of excess deaths in 2020, we changed our methodology for the 2021 mortality file and have instead

been using 2019 volume as the baseline measure, which generally has overstated each jurisdiction's file completeness. Starting in late July, we will be adjusting your target 2021 mortality volumes based on the number of excess deaths we have already received from your jurisdiction for the first half of the 2021 data year. We will continue to make further adjustments during the year, as needed. For some, this will noticeably reduce your 2021 mortality completeness but will better reflect how current your submissions are. If you have questions about your jurisdiction's mortality file completeness, please reach out to your assigned Vital Statistics Specialist.

## Vital Statistics Modernization Community of Practice



This month, we would like to announce an exciting opportunity to participate in a connectathon event to test FHIR based interoperability in the mortality ecosystem. The HL7 connectathon is scheduled for September 13-15, 2021 and will be a virtual event (<http://www.hl7.org/events/fhir-connectathon/index.cfm>). NCHS will have a presence at this event to support the testing of both the EDRS to NCHS and CMS to EDRS workflows. We invite jurisdictions and their partners to participate to assist in validating updates to the HL7 Vital Records Death Reporting (VRDR) FHIR Implementation Guide and test the use of FHIR APIs for the CMS to EDRS workflow(s).

NCHS is putting together detailed test plan(s) for both workflows which will be shared during upcoming COP technical subgroup calls and Office Hours. Beginning in August, the standards team, led by NCHS' Cindy Bush and Alaina Gregory, will host weekly calls to help states and their technical partners prepare. Unlike prior connectathons, participants will have an opportunity to test using their own data in addition to synthetic data provided by NCHS.

The outcome from this effort will validate the IG and in addition, will give jurisdictions/vendors opportunities to refine their systems/processes using FHIR. The registration fees are TBA but [this link](#) provides a reference for what fees have been in previous meetings. There has been significant interest from the jurisdictional community to participate; so far, the following have expressed interest: DC, GA, HI, MN, NYC, UT. You are welcome to participate no matter what level of system maturity using FHIR. If you are interested in being a part of this effort, please send a note to [NVSSmodernization@cdc.gov](mailto:NVSSmodernization@cdc.gov).

**Check out our new video, now on NCHS' YouTube channel: [NVSS Modernization COP Video](#)**

***Thanks to the following presenters during the July NVSS COP meeting!:***

**The Theme: The role of [Health Information Exchanges](#) and medical record information in improving the quality of mortality data.**

1. **"The benefits of HIEs to ME/C"** presented by Jim Gill, MD, President of NAME

(National Association of Medical Examiners), Chief Medical Examiner for Connecticut.

2. **"The Importance of HIEs in providing timely and accurate death investigations"** presented by Melanie Rouse, Coroner, Clark County Office of the C/ME, Las Vegas, NV.

### **[Notable Publications/Data Briefs](#)**

#### **Maternal and Infant Characteristics among Women with COVID-19 during Pregnancy**

This web release can be found at this [link](#). It shows data for April 2020 through April 2021 from fourteen states and the District of Columbia that are collecting information on confirmed or presumed COVID-19 cases among pregnant women and reporting this information to NCHS. These data continue to show a disproportionate impact of COVID-19 for certain race and Hispanic origin groups, higher rates of ICU admission among mothers with COVID-19 compared with those who did not have COVID-19, and higher rates of preterm birth, low birthweight and NICU admission among infants born to mothers with presumed or confirmed COVID-19.

#### **Provisional Estimates for Selected Maternal and Infant Outcomes by Month, 2018 through March 2021**

This web release can be found at this [link](#). It shows national provisional birth data by month for January 2020 through March 2021, compared with 2019 and 2018 for selected medical and health items. The next release will include data through June 2021.

**[Click here for previous newsletter issues!](#)**