

National Hospital Care Survey Early Release Data Dictionary

For Restricted Use Data Files



Division of Health Care Statistics
National Center for Health Statistics
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Introduction

This document contains the file layout for the National Hospital Care Survey (NHCS) 2020-2025 early release administrative claims data in the National Center for Health Statistics and Federal Research Data Centers (RDC). The NHCS collects data on patient care in hospital-based settings to describe patterns of health care delivery and utilization in the United States. Settings currently include inpatient and emergency departments. It is important to note that the NHCS early release data are not nationally representative. The data are preliminary and are used in the development of the Drug Use-associated Hospital Encounters Data From Selected Hospitals dashboard (<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/dhcs/drug-use/index.htm>).

Table 1 describes the number of hospitals that submitted unweighted early release administrative claims encounter data for each calendar year (January 1 – December 31) by setting.

Table 1: Number of Participating Hospitals, Unweighted Encounters, and Weighted Encounters by Year and Department

Year	Inpatient Department		Emergency Department	
	Hospitals	Unweighted Encounters	Hospitals	Unweighted Encounters
2020	90	1,223,067	84	2,953,465
2021	108	1,494,875	95	3,999,506
2022	107	1,445,908	96	4,270,064
2023	108	1,476,077	95	4,028,492
2024	103	1,501,808	89	3,942,724
2025	106	1,551,287	92	4,193,706

Variable Name	Description	Format	Value
SUR_YR	4-digit designation for calendar year of data collection	Character	2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025
HOSPID	Hospital identifier	Character	4-digit code
REGION	Geographic region of hospital location	Numeric	1 = Northeast 2 = Midwest 3 = South 4 = West
SERVICE	Service type of hospital	Numeric	1 = General Acute Care 2 = Children's 3 = Psychiatric 4 = Other (Long-term care and Rehabilitation)
BEDS5	Number of staffed inpatient beds		1 = 6-99 beds 2 = 100-199 beds 3 = 200-299 beds 4 = 300-499 beds 5 = 500 or more beds
URBRURAL4	Urban/rural designation of hospital (https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data-analysis-tools/urban-rural.html)	Numeric	1 = Large central metro 2 = Large fringe metro 3 = Medium and small metro 4 = Micropolitan and Noncore
SETTING	Identifies if the encounter is in the inpatient or emergency department	Character	IP = Inpatient department ED = Emergency department
ENCOUNTER_ID	Unique identifier of encounter	Character	
SEX	Sex of patient	Numeric	1 = Male 2 = Female -7 = Unknown -9 = Missing
AGE	Age in years, months, or days	Numeric	

Variable Name	Description	Format	Value
AGE_UNIT	Units for age	Numeric	1 = Years 2 = Months 3 = Days
DATE_BEG	Start date for encounter	Date	
DATE_ADM	Date of admission	Date	
DATE_END	End date for encounter	Date	
DISCSTAT	Discharge status of encounter	Numeric	1 = Routine to home 2 = Home health/hospice 3 = Admitted as inpatient 4 = Left against medical advice 5 = Transfer to short term facility 6 = Transfer to long term facility 7 = Court/Law enforcement 8 = Dead 9 = Other health care facility 10 = Other discharge not otherwise specified -5 = Invalid code -7 = Unknown -9 = Missing
LOS	Length of inpatient admission	Numeric	
ICU_LOS	Length of inpatient admission in the intensive care unit	Numeric	
DX01 – DX25	ICD-10-CM diagnoses codes: up to 25 listed codes	Character	ICD-10-CM Some hospitals truncated submissions to 10 diagnoses in data years 2021-2024
PD01 – PD25	ICD-10-PCS procedure codes: up to 25 listed codes	Character	ICD-10-PCS Some hospitals truncated submissions to 10 diagnoses in data years 2021-2024
REV_PDS	CPT/HCPCS procedure codes: unrestricted number of codes	Character	CPT or HCPCS

Variable Name	Description	Format	Value
INTUBATION_VENT	Intubation or ventilator use is defined by at least one of the following: • Ventilator use is defined by any listed ICD–10–PCS codes: 5A19054, 5A1935Z, 5A1945Z, or 5A1955Z Emergency endotracheal intubation is defined by any listed Current Procedural Terminology (CPT).	Numeric	1 = Patient received intubation or used a ventilator 0 = Patient was not intubated or on a ventilator