

# Redesigning the National Health Interview Survey Questionnaire

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# Getting acquainted

- **History**
- **Uses**
- **Content**
- **Format**
- **Redesign goals**
- **Gathering Input**

# History

- **Established by the 1956 National Health Survey Act, Public Law 652, 84th Congress**
- **Authorized as the National Health Survey**
- **First fielded in July 1957 and continuously ever since**
- **Collect and disseminate data on the health status and health care access of the U.S. non-institutionalized population**
- **Last redesign was in 1997**

# Uses of the data

- **Annual report to Congress**
- **Address specific issues of ongoing and emergent public health concern**
- **Provide estimates for monitoring (Health United States, Healthy People program)**
  - **69 Healthy People 2020 Objectives**
  - **71 Healthy People 2010 Objectives**
  - **Dashboards and indicators**
- **Research**
- **Policy and program evaluation**
- **Benchmark**

# NHIS format

- **In-person household interview survey**
- **With some telephone follow-up**
- **Interviews performed by trained U. S. Census Bureau interviewers**
- **Computer-assisted personal interviewing**
- **Household/family respondent, sample adult, sample child**
- **Core (annual) and supplements (periodic, one-time)**

# NHIS core domains

- **Health status**
  - **Conditions, injuries, activity limitations**
- **Health care services**
  - **Access to care, utilization, health care coverage**
- **Health behaviors**
  - **Risk and preventive factors**
- **Sociodemographic characteristics**

# Core module

- **Household composition\***
- **Family questions\***
- **Recontact information\***
- **Adult section^**
- **Child section^**

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\*asked of a household member

^person-specific

# Supplements

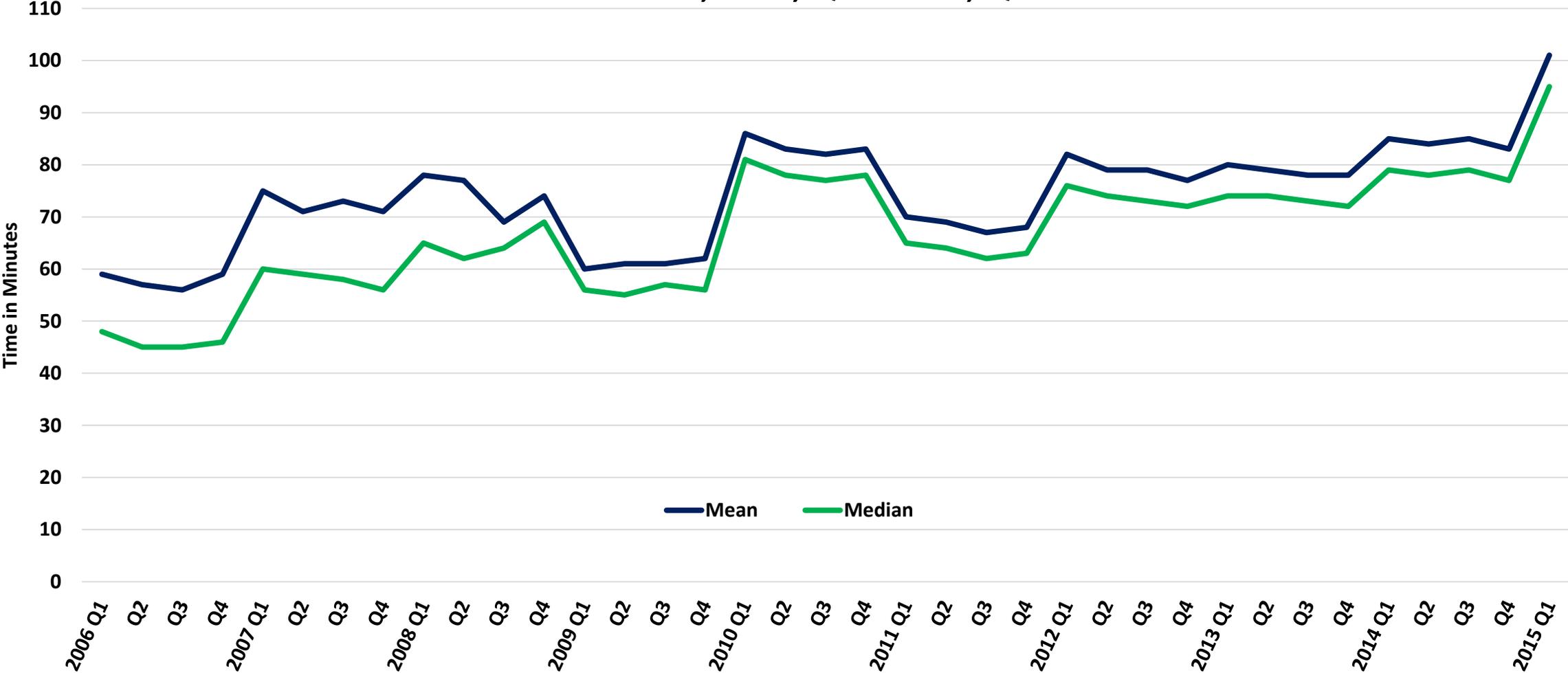
- **One time, annual, or periodic**
- **Sponsor driven and funded**
- **One question or many**
- **Currently take 35-45 minutes**
- **Examples of recent topics**
  - **Complementary and alternative medicine**
  - **Voice, speech, language, and balance**
  - **Cancer prevention and control**
  - **Food security**
  - **Health information technology**
  - **Impact of chronic pain**

# Redesign goals

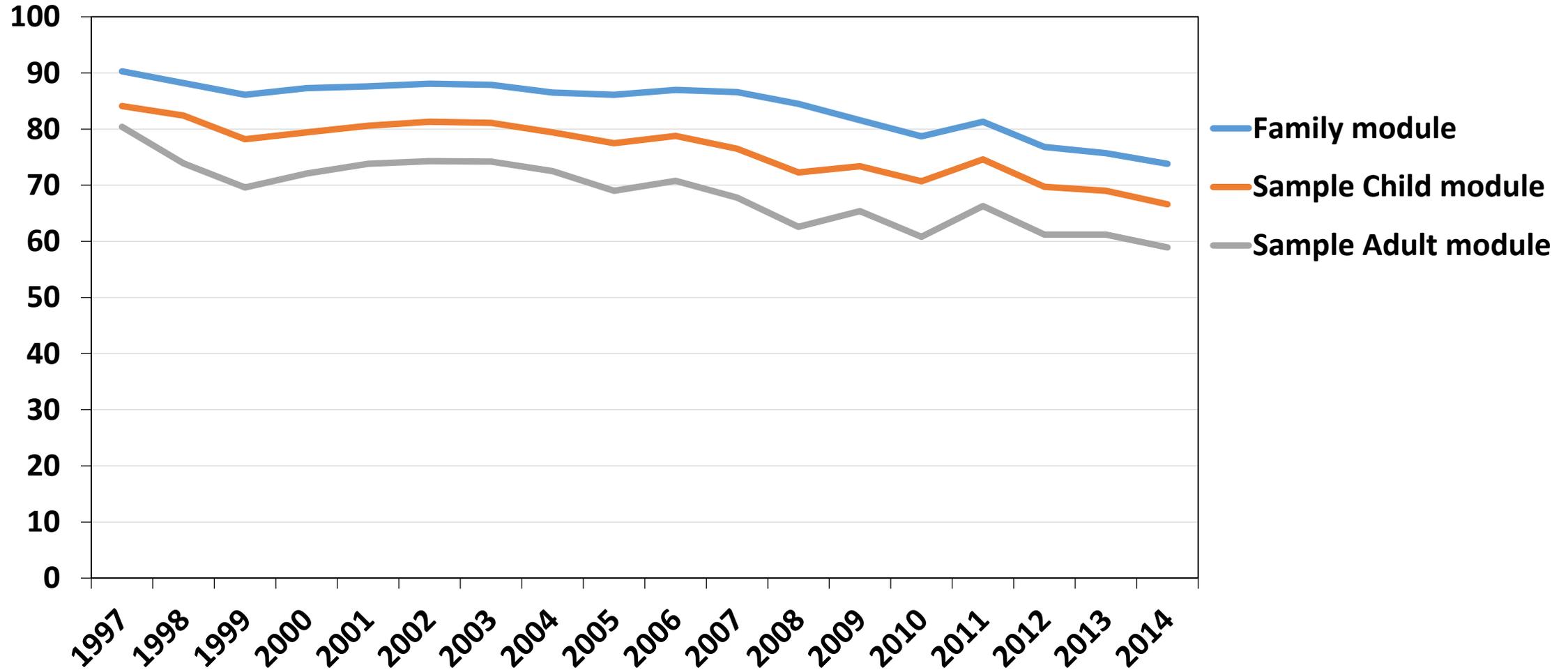
- **Shorten the questionnaire**
- **Improve the flow**
- **Make more current**
- **Synch content with other HHS surveys**
- **Eliminate repetition**
- **Avoid rare event content**
- **Streamline for faster release (less coding)**
- **Improve response rates**
- **Include biomeasures**

# Length of Completed Interviews (in minutes), by Quarter

Length of Completed Interviews (in minutes), by Quarter:  
NHIS, 2006, Q1 -- 2015, Q1



# NHIS Unconditional Response Rates



# Redesign timeline

- **2014 – 2015: Stakeholder engagement, outreach**
- **2015 – 2016: Qualitative and quantitative assessment of new or revised questions**
- **Summer 2016 – Spring 2017: OMB review and public comment**
- **Late Spring 2017: Revised questionnaire programmed**
- **January 2018: Revised questionnaire fielded**

# Gathering input

- **Public comment**
  - Federal register notice
  - NCHS website
- **Contacting stakeholders**
- **Reviewing other survey content**
- **Work groups**

# What we need to know

- **How are NHIS data currently being used?**
- **What is considered to be the most critical content on the survey?**
- **What content is assumed will always be there (or should always be there) regardless of how short the questionnaire gets?**
- **What periodicity is acceptable for other content?**
- **What are we doing or collecting that is not useful?**
- **What limitations have been encountered when using NHIS data?**
- **How could NHIS data be more useful?**

# Contact us

[healthsurveys@cdc.gov](mailto:healthsurveys@cdc.gov)

[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/nchs\\_listservs.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/nchs_listservs.htm)