

# Survey Analysis Plan

## Vision & Eye Health Surveillance System

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## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
The Vision and Eye Health Surveillance System (VEHSS) .....	1
Overview of the Integration of National Surveys in VEHSS .....	1
<b>Analysis Plan Outline</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Step 1: Survey Validation and Dataset Preparation.....	3
Step 2: Define Outcome and Stratification Variables.....	3
Step 3: Estimate Results.....	5
Step 4: Dataset preparation .....	6
<b>Disseminating Results and Statistics</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Data Reports.....	8
<b>Appendix A. Categorization Schema for National Survey Variables</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix B. VEHSS Uniform Data Table Template</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix C. VEHSS Uniform Data Template: Survey Stratification Factors Data Dictionary</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix D. Default Prevalence Estimates Stratifications for Survey Data</b> .....	<b>17</b>

## List of Tables

<b>Table 1.</b>	Example Data Dictionary Table.....	8
<b>Table 2.</b>	Example Summary Outcome Table .....	9
<b>Table 3.</b>	Overview of Surveys and TOPICS .....	11
<b>Table 4.</b>	Survey questions included in analysis.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>Table 5.</b>	VEHSS Uniform Data Table Template .....	12
<b>Table 6.</b>	PUF Ages .....	14
<b>Table 7.</b>	Race/Ethnicity Categories.....	14
<b>Table 8.</b>	Sex Categories .....	14
<b>Table 9.</b>	Risk Factors.....	15
<b>Table 10.</b>	Locations .....	15
<b>Table 11.</b>	Insurance (RDF only).....	16

DISCLAIMER: The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of NORC at the University of Chicago or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Introduction

### The Vision and Eye Health Surveillance System (VEHSS)

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a cooperative agreement with NORC at the University of Chicago (NORC) to establish a national Vision and Eye Health Surveillance System (VEHSS). NORC has partnered with leading organizations in vision care and research, and an expert panel provides oversight and review of VEHSS results and work products.

This document serves as a data analysis guide for survey data used by VEHSS analysts and data providers and may be updated throughout the course of the project.

### Overview of the Integration of National Surveys in VEHSS

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National surveys play an important role in VEHSS. The five-step process described below provides an overview of VEHSS' approach to compile and leverage vision and eye health data across multiple national surveys. The goal is to present those data to the public and use them to estimate national prevalence and service utilization rates.

- **Project Step 1. Identify sources of vision and eye health related survey data**

In the project's first step, we identified and reviewed different potential data sources, including national surveys. We identified 16 national surveys with vision and eye health related instruments.

- **Project Step 2. Summarize characteristics of the survey methodology and instruments**

In the next step, we compiled the key methodological features and eye and vision related questions and measures in each survey. These were summarized and reported in VEHSS' "Review of National Survey Data on Eye Health Report."

- **Project Step 3. Identify and define categories to organize and present outcomes from multiple surveys in a comparable manner**

We created a 2-level categorization schema (categories and subgroups) for all survey questions from the 16 identified surveys. Based on survey methodology, sampling frame and included instruments, we recommended including the following six surveys:

1. American Community Survey (ACS)
2. Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System (BRFSS)
3. Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS)
4. National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)
5. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)

## 6. National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH)

We also recommended including and excluding specific survey questions among these 6 surveys. The questions listed in Appendix A are based on these recommendations as well as comments received from the VEHSS expert panel.

### ■ **Project Step 4. Analyze individual surveys to populate the outcome categories with single-source estimates**

VEHSS analyzed the selected surveys to generate single-source estimates for the categorized data indicators. The term 'single source' refers to estimates derived from a single data source. The single source estimation step results in public use files (PUFs) which contain high-level summary results for each individual dataset. The analysis and results of each survey are documented in separate data analysis reports, and the PUFs are available through the VEHSS data visualization application and the CDC Open Data platform. The research team also created research de-identified files (RDF) for datasets that are used internal to the project for further analysis.

### ■ **Project Step 5. Select individual surveys for inclusion in the statistical integration models to generate the comprehensive national estimates**

In the final VEHSS project step, we build on the single-source estimates by further harmonizing multiple data sources including surveys, claims, registry, and population-based study estimates. This process uses statistical meta-regression models to summarize estimates derived from the RDFs from multiple sources, and to create sociodemographic group specific, national and state level prevalence and service utilization rate estimates for selected vision and eye health data indicators.

This report presents the project plan for utilizing the national surveys to create single-source estimates in Step 4 above. An overview of the approach to analysis and dissemination is provided. The appendices contain supporting documentation to further explain how variables are categorized and analyzed.

## Analysis Plan Outline

This section presents VEHSS' overall analysis plan which uses the survey question categories, analysis factor variables, and output data format included in Appendices A-D.

### Step 1: Survey Validation and Dataset Preparation

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The initial approach to dataset preparation included the following steps:

#### Review identified variables

Based on publicly available survey documentation, we identified vision and eye health related questions for each survey, as described in the “Review of National Survey Data on Eye Health Report.” In some cases, survey documentation was incomplete.

Analysts locate outcome and stratification variables in the data files and confirm the accuracy and completeness of the survey and survey instrument information in the survey identification report.

#### Select years of data for analysis

We evaluate survey variable availability by year, sample size and response frequencies to determine which years of each dataset to analyze, and whether multiple years must be merged to increase the sample size.

#### Survey structure, weighting, and denominators

Analysts further review the survey documentation to identify any relevant information such as missing value coding, skip patterns, and survey weighting. The proper denominator is defined for each survey instrument.

#### Internal consistency of questions

Analysts check questions for consistency in measurement and language both within and across surveys. Checks within surveys included checking skip patterns and the level of contradictory responses among two or more similar questions. Major internal consistency issues are described in the Survey data analysis reports for each data source.

### Step 2: Define Outcome and Stratification Variables

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The next step in survey data analysis is to define the outcome, risk factor, and other stratification variables. Outcome measures are determined based on the survey question response options, which are mapped to response options defined by the VEHSS project as part of the categorization schema described in Appendix A. Over time, survey outcome measures may change due to changes in survey questions, or

changes to the VEHSS categorization schema. Outcome measures, stratification variables, and response values are modeled after the VEHSS Uniform Dataset Template in Appendix B.

## Define variable types and responses

Analysts determined if outcome variables and risk factor variables are bivariate or scaled response.

### ***Scaled responses:***

We include some scaled response variables as part of the single-source estimates. Scaled responses are analyzed as proportions, such that all possible responses sum to 100%. Scaled responses therefore include response values for survey responses such as I don't know, Missing, Refused, etc.

### ***Bivariate responses:***

Bivariate responses are defined as questions with responses primarily consisting of Yes or No. Responses may also include Refused, Missing, or other responses indicating that the question was not answered.

The VEHSS team considered different options for coding responses for such questions. Currently, only Yes responses are coded. The denominator of this response includes all respondents who provided a Yes or No response. Other responses such as Refused or I don't know were dropped from the denominator. This approach is based on CDC guidance, and follows their standard practice for reporting proportions from surveys.

## The VEHSS Uniform Dataset Template

The VEHSS Uniform Dataset Template is a standardized data format and data dictionary that ensures that all data is organized and reported in a consistent manner to support the CDC data visualization application, the CDC Open Data platform, and the DisMOD-MR statistical integration model. Variable templates are summarized below, and included in detail in Appendix B.

### ***Race and Sex:***

As defined in the VEHSS uniform data template, survey respondents were assigned to mutually exclusive race/ethnicity and sex categories. If a particular survey did not include all race/ethnicities, this was noted in the data brief and documentation for that survey.

### ***Age groups:***

All surveys were analyzed using:

- Overall total (all ages)
- Major Age Groups (0-17, 18-39, 40-64, 65-84, 85+)

Survey files included in the statistical integration model use the VEHSS/World Health Organization (WHO) expanded age groups as noted below (0-1, 1-4, 5-9, 10-14, etc.).

### ***Risk Factors:***

The risk factors currently included in the VEHS survey analyses are diabetes, hypertension, and smoking. Each risk factor is analyzed independently of the others. Risk factors responses are defined in the VEHS Uniform Data Template.

As with eye and vision indicators, risk factor responses may be bivariate or scaled. Bivariate responses were calculated for Yes, No, Refused/Don't Know, and Total. Proportions for each level of scaled responses were calculated and sum to a 100% of total responses. Respondents with missing risk factor responses were included in the overall analysis.

Analysts coded some risk factors as bivariate to avoid high suppression rates. For example, Smoking was collapsed into a bivariate response (yes-including current and former, and no-including never) for NHANES to avoid near universal suppression.

### ***Insurance:***

Insurance status was included for integration into RDF results only. Missing insurance was noted, and respondents with missing insurance responses were included in the overall analysis.

### ***States:***

If available, survey results were analyzed by state. Missing states were noted, and respondents with missing state responses were included in the overall analysis.

## **Step 3: Estimate Results**

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Each dataset was analyzed based on the years selected for inclusion.

### **Data Values**

The primary data value is a proportion and reported using a percentage format. For bivariate responses, this corresponds to the prevalence rate of Yes responses. For scaled responses, the data value is a proportion of respondents for each scale response value, and all responses sum to 100%.

### **Statistical measures**

Based on the recommended standard for calculating small confidence intervals for proportions from the NCHS, upper and lower confidence intervals and the relative standard error (RSE) were calculated using the Clopper-Pearson (exact) method.\* The respondent sample size are reported for each response.

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\* Parker JD, Talih M, Malec DJ, et al. National Center for Health Statistics Data Presentation Standards for Proportions. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 2(175). 2017



## Age adjustment

The data visualization application allows display of different data types, including ‘crude prevalence’ and ‘age adjusted prevalence’. When included, age adjusted results may use alternative methods for calculating confidence intervals because of statistical software limitations.

## Step 4: Dataset preparation

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### Summary Table Public Use Files (PUF)

In addition to creating single-source estimates for the VEHSS data visualization application, we also created summary table PUFs. PUFs do not contain any patient-level records. PUFs are de-identified, summary data tables which contain prevalence rates, scaled responses, utilization rates, and sample sizes. The data are summarized across multiple patients and grouped by the different stratification factors described in Appendix C. All survey, claims, and registry data are formatted into a PUF based on the VEHSS uniform data template to create individual datasets using the same data structure and a common set of data identifiers.

The age groups, suppression, and dissemination rules for PUFs are described below:

#### **Age Groups:**

Age groups are as follows: 0-17, 18-39, 40-64, 65-84, 85+.

#### **Suppression:**

The data suppression rules are:

- Suppress rate only if RSE >30%  
Footnote: “\*\*Some values are suppressed due to a relative standard error >30%”
- Suppress rate and sample size if sample size < 30  
Footnote: “\*Some values are suppressed due to a sample size <30”
- Suppress rate and sample size if both  
Footnote: “\*\*\*Some values are suppressed due to a sample size<30 and a relative standard error >30%”

Suppressed rows remain in the PUF, with footnotes indicating the reason for suppression. This suppression algorithm was developed based in part on a review of common suppression algorithms for

health data from sample survey results and population count systems in use by Healthy People 2010, as well as current CDC Vision Health Initiative (VHI) practice.<sup>†</sup>

***Dissemination:***

PUFs are loaded onto the CDC Open Data platform or housed on a separate secure server. If a data provider does not want the actual PUF to be accessible to the public, the PUF can be housed on a separate secure server. The data visualization application can still query the data, but only do so for one data point at a time. This effectively prevents users from obtaining or recreating the full dataset. Currently, all survey PUFs are loaded onto the CDC Open Data Platform.

***Stratifications:***

Because the data visualization application displays lines of data, but does not perform calculations, every possible combination of stratification variables that is displayed in the data visualization application was previously specified in the PUF table. For each state/national level, there are 24 potential combinations of stratification factors as detailed in Appendix D. Stratification factors include:

- Age (age group)
- Race (race/ethnicity)
- Sex
- Risk Factor, and
- State/national location

Not all combinations are included in the PUF data. The drop-down menu options in the data visualization application are data driven. If a combination of factors is not in the PUF, then users are not given this option. Stratification level decisions for each dataset are made on a case by case basis. Where possible, we include all stratifications unless it results in exceptionally high missing or suppressed rates. Specifics are provided in the individual survey data reports. For example, in the ACS we included all state level stratifications. In contrast, for NSCH, we included all stratification levels for national results only. For state level NSCH results, we found that >90% of the results were missing/suppressed, and therefore, we decided to only include single-level stratification at the state level.

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<sup>†</sup> Klein RJ, Proctor SE, Boudreault MA, Turczyn KM. Healthy People 2010 criteria for data suppression. Statistical Notes, no 24. Hyattsville, Maryland: National Center for Health Statistics. June 2002. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/statnt/statnt24.pdf>

## Disseminating Results and Statistics

### Data Reports

Preliminary results and statistics from each PUF dataset are compiled into summary data reports, with tables and figures depicting results for each outcome by each available stratification factor (age group, race/ethnicity, sex, risk factor, state) . Reports include the elements described below.

### Dataset description

We provide a description of the survey, including:

- Purpose and Scope
- Sample Design
- Data Collection Procedures

### Analysis Process

We document the analysis procedures, including any issues encountered during analysis. For example, we describe issues with missing data or issues with data quality for internal consistency.

- Analysis Overview
- Analysis Variables

### Data Dictionary and Classification to VEHSS Indicators

We outline the variables reported in the analysis based on the VEHSS Uniform dataset template.

**Table 1.** Example Data Dictionary Table

NSCH					
VEHSS Indicator Topic	VEHSS Indicator Category	NSCH Variable Name	Years Available	Question	Response Options
Visual Function	Difficulty Seeing with Glasses	K2Q44A	2007, 2011/2012	Has a doctor or other health care provider ever told you that [CHILD] had vision problems that cannot be corrected with glasses or contact lenses?	1 Yes
					2 No
Visual Function	Vision Impairment	K2Q44C	2007, 2011/2012	Would you describe [his/her] vision problems as mild, moderate, or severe?	1 Mild
					2 Moderate
					3 Severe
					4 Don't Know
					5 Refused

## Validation Results

We provide a review and description of the survey sample sizes, number of cells suppressed, initial data quality checks, and other validation steps.

### Summary Outcome measures:

Data tables are created to include the rate, 95% confidence interval of the rate, and the sample size for each indicator. Indicators are reported by single level stratifications (\*when available) by:

- Age group
- Race/ethnicity
- Sex
- Risk factor\*
- State\*
- Insurance\*

**Table 2.** Example Summary Outcome Table

Sex	Prevalence Rate	Sample Size
<b>Male</b>	1.9 (1.6-2.2)	49,163
<b>Female</b>	1.6 (1.3-1.8)	46,292

## Appendix A. Categorization Schema for National Survey Variables

The proposed 2-level categorization schema for the chosen national survey questions, based on general topics and categories, is presented below.

- Eye Health Conditions
  - ▶ Cataract
  - ▶ Diabetic Retinopathy
  - ▶ Glaucoma
  - ▶ Age Related Macular Degeneration
- Visual Function
  - ▶ Blind or severe difficulty seeing
  - ▶ Difficulty seeing with glasses
  - ▶ Near-sightedness
  - ▶ Far-sightedness
  - ▶ Vision correction
  - ▶ Vision impairment
- Service Utilization
  - ▶ Exam with dilation
  - ▶ Refractive correction
  - ▶ Cataract surgery
- Insurance Coverage and Costs
  - ▶ Insurance
- Examination Measures
  - ▶ Visual acuity

**Table 3.** Overview of Surveys and TOPICS

		Topics				Total Topics per Survey
		Eye Conditions	Visual Function	Service Utilization	Examination Measures	
<b>Surveys</b>	ACS		•			1
	BRFSS	•	•	•		3
	NHANES	•	•	•	•	4
	NHATS		•		•	1
	NHIS	•	•	•		3
	NSCH		•			1
<b>Total Surveys per Topic</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	

## Appendix B. VEHSS Uniform Data Table Template

**Table 5.** VEHSS Uniform Data Table Template

Source Column	Description	Data Type
<b>YearStart</b>	Starting Year for year range	number
<b>YearEnd</b>	Ending Year for year range, same as starting year if single year used in evaluation.	number
<b>LocationAbbr</b>	State Abbreviation	plain text
<b>LocationDesc</b>	State Name	plain text
<b>DataSource</b>	Abbreviation of Data Source	plain text
<b>Topic</b>	Topic description	plain text
<b>Category</b>	Category Description	plain text
<b>Question</b>	Question Description (i.e., Percentage of adults with diabetic retinopathy)	plain text
<b>Response</b>	Optional column to hold the response value that was evaluated.	plain text
<b>Age</b>	Stratification value for age group e.g. 18-24yrs	plain text
<b>Sex</b>	Stratification value for sex e.g. Male, Female	plain text
<b>RaceEthnicity</b>	Stratification value for race e.g. White, non-hispanic	plain text
<b>RiskFactor</b>	Stratification value for major risk factor e.g. diabetes	plain text
<b>RiskFactorResponse</b>	Optional column to hold response for the risk factor that was evaluated.	plain text
<b>Data_Value_Unit</b>	The unit, such as "%" for percentage	plain text
<b>Data_Value_Type</b>	The data value type, such as age-adjusted prevalence or crude prevalence	plain text
<b>Data_Value</b>	Data Value, such as 14.7 or no value if footnote symbol is present	number
<b>Data_Value_Footnote_Symbol</b>	Footnote symbol	plain text
<b>Data_Value_Footnote</b>	Footnote text	plain text
<b>Low_Confidence_limit</b>	95% confidence interval lower bound	number
<b>High_Confidence_Limit</b>	95% confidence interval higher bound	number
<b>Sample_Size</b>	Survey sample	number
<b>LocationID</b>	Lookup identifier value for Location	plain text
<b>GeoLocation</b>	Latitude & Longitude to be provided for formatting GeoLocation or Geocode in the format (latitude, longitude)	location
<b>TopicID</b>	Lookup identifier value for Topic	plain text

Source Column	Description	Data Type
<b>CategoryID</b>	Identifier for category	plain text
<b>QuestionID</b>	Lookup identifier value for Question	plain text
<b>ResponseID</b>	Response identifier for Question	Plain text
<b>AgeID</b>	Identifier for the stratification1 (Age)	plain text
<b>SexID</b>	Identifier for the stratification2 (Sex)	plain text
<b>RaceEthnicityID</b>	Identifier for the stratification3 (Race/Ethnicity)	plain text
<b>RiskFactorID</b>	Identifier for the stratification4 (Major Risk Factor)	plain text
<b>RiskFactorResponseID</b>	Response identifier for Major Risk Factor Response	plain text



## Appendix C. VEHSS Uniform Data Template: Survey Stratification Factors Data Dictionary

**Table 6.** PUF Ages

AgeID	Age
AGEALL	All Ages
AGE017	0-17 years
AGE1839	18-39 years
AGE4064	40-64 years
AGE6584	65-84 years
AGE85PLUS	85 years and older

**Table 7.** Race/Ethnicity Categories

RaceEthnicityID	RaceEthnicity
ALLRACE	All races
ASN	Asian
BLK	Black, non-Hispanic
HISP	Hispanic, any race
NONE	None given or missing
AIAN	North American Native
OTH	Other
WHT	White, non-Hispanic
UNK	Unknown

**Table 8.** Sex Categories

SexID	Description
GM	Male
GF	Female
GALL	Total
GU	Unknown

**Table 9. Risk Factors**

RiskFactorID	RiskFactor
RFALLPAR	All patients All participants (survey)
RFDM	Diabetes
RFHT	Hypertension
RFSM	Smoking
RFNR	No Risk Factors

**Table 10. Locations**

LocationId	LocationAbbr	LocationDesc	GeoLocation	StateType
59	US	National (States and DC)		National
01	AL	Alabama	(32.84057112200048, -86.63186076199969)	State
02	AK	Alaska	(64.84507995700051, -147.72205903599973)	State
04	AZ	Arizona	(34.865970280000454, -111.76381127699972)	State
05	AR	Arkansas	(34.74865012400045, -92.27449074299966)	State
06	CA	California	(37.63864012300047, -120.99999953799971)	State
08	CO	Colorado	(38.843840757000464, -106.13361092099967)	State
09	CT	Connecticut	(41.56266102000046, -72.64984095199964)	State
10	DE	Delaware	(39.008830667000495, -75.57774116799965)	State
12	FL	Florida	(28.932040377000476, -81.92896053899966)	State
13	GA	Georgia	(32.83968109300048, -83.62758034599966)	State
16	ID	Idaho	(43.682630005000476, -114.36373004199997)	State
17	IL	Illinois	(40.48501028300046, -88.99771017799969)	State
18	IN	Indiana	(39.766910452000445, -86.14996019399968)	State
19	IA	Iowa	(42.46940091300047, -93.81649055599968)	State
20	KS	Kansas	(38.34774030000045, -98.20078122699965)	State
31	NE	Nebraska	(41.6410409880005, -99.36572062299967)	State
40	OK	Oklahoma	(35.47203135600046, -97.52107021399968)	State
44	RI	Rhode Island	(41.70828019300046, -71.52247031399963)	State
47	TN	Tennessee	(35.68094058000048, -85.77449091399967)	State
15	HI	Hawaii	(21.304850435000446, -157.85774940299973)	State
22	LA	Louisiana	(31.31266064400046, -92.44568007099969)	State
23	ME	Maine	(45.254228894000505, -68.98503133599962)	State
24	MD	Maryland	(39.29058096400047, -76.60926011099963)	State
25	MA	Massachusetts	(42.27687047000046, -72.08269067499964)	State
26	MI	Michigan	(44.6613195430005, -84.71439026999968)	State
27	MN	Minnesota	(46.35564873600049, -94.79420050299967)	State
28	MS	Mississippi	(32.745510099000455, -89.53803082499968)	State
29	MO	Missouri	(38.635790776000476, -92.56630005299968)	State
30	MT	Montana	(47.06652897200047, -109.42442064499971)	State
32	NV	Nevada	(39.493240390000494, -117.07184056399967)	State
33	NH	New Hampshire	(43.65595011300047, -71.50036091999965)	State
34	NJ	New Jersey	(40.13057004800049, -74.27369128799967)	State

LocationId	LocationAbbr	LocationDesc	GeoLocation	StateType
35	NM	New Mexico	(34.52088095200048, -106.24058098499967)	State
36	NY	New York	(42.82700103200045, -75.54397042699964)	State
37	NC	North Carolina	(35.466220975000454, -79.15925046299964)	State
38	ND	North Dakota	(47.47531977900047, -100.11842104899966)	State
39	OH	Ohio	(40.06021014100048, -82.40426005599966)	State
41	OR	Oregon	(44.56744942400047, -120.15503132599969)	State
42	PA	Pennsylvania	(40.79373015200048, -77.86070029399963)	State
45	SC	South Carolina	(33.998821303000454, -81.04537120699968)	State
46	SD	South Dakota	(44.353130053000484, -100.3735306369997)	State
48	TX	Texas	(31.827240407000488, -99.42677020599967)	State
49	UT	Utah	(39.360700171000474, -111.58713063499971)	State
50	VT	Vermont	(43.62538123900049, -72.51764079099962)	State
51	VA	Virginia	(37.54268067400045, -78.45789046299967)	State
53	WA	Washington	(47.52227862900048, -120.47001078999972)	State
54	WV	West Virginia	(38.66551020200046, -80.71264013499967)	State
55	WI	Wisconsin	(44.39319117400049, -89.81637074199966)	State
56	WY	Wyoming	(43.23554134300048, -108.10983035299967)	State
11	DC	District of Columbia	(38.89037138500049, -77.03196112699965)	State
21	KY	Kentucky	(37.645970271000465, -84.77497104799966)	State
72	PR	Puerto Rico	(18.2208330, -66.5901490)	Territory
66	GU	Guam	(13.4443040, 144.7937310)	Territory
78	VI	U.S. Virgin Islands	(18.3357650, -64.8963350)	Territory
69	MP	Northern Mariana Islands	(15.097900, 145.673900)	Territory
68	MH	Marshall Islands	(11.3246908, 166.84174239999993)	Territory
70	PW	Palau	(7.514979999999999, 134.58251999999993)	Territory
60	AS	American Samoa	(-14.3016396, -170.69618149999997)	Territory
0	XX	Missing location		

Table 11. Insurance (RDF only)

InsuranceID	Insurance
Ins_D	Medicare+Medicaid Dual Eligible
Ins_E	Medicaid
Ins_S	Medicare Fee For Service
Ins_C	Medicare Managed
Ins_Y	Military
Ins_G	Other Gov
Ins_P	Private
Ins_U	No Payment Listed
Ins_All	All payers

## Appendix D. Default Prevalence Estimates Stratifications for Survey Data

By national and by state:

1-way

1. Age
2. Race
3. Sex
4. RiskFactor

2-way

5. Age\*Race
6. Age\*Sex
7. Age\*RiskFactor
8. Race\*Sex
9. Race\*RiskFactor
10. Sex\*RiskFactor

3-way

11. Age\*Race\*Sex
12. Age\*Race\*RiskFactor
13. Age\*Sex\*RiskFactor
14. Race\*Sex\*RiskFactor

4-way

15. Age\*Race\*Sex\*RiskFactor