



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.

2024 NAPHSIS Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars and save the date for an exciting and insightful NAPHSIS Annual Meeting in the vibrant city of Detroit, Michigan May 20-22, 2024, where industry leaders, innovators, and professionals in the vital records community will converge to explore the latest trends, exchange ideas, and network in the heart of the Motor City. Learn more on the NAPHSIS Website [here!](#)

VSCP Project Directors Webinar

The VSCP Project Directors Webinar occurs on the second Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. Eastern. The VSCP Project Directors Webinar for December has been cancelled. The next VSCP Project Directors Webinar will be January 10, 2024, at 2 p.m. Eastern. The link to register for this webinar will be included in the December newsletter.

Field Services Special Interest Group

What questions do you have regarding field services and data quality? Want to hear about best practices in training your providers? Do you need guidance on quality assurance programs? If so, the Field Services Interest Group monthly meetings can be a great source. Hear from jurisdictions sharing their experiences and lessons learned in dealing with their internal and external partners on various field services, data quality improvement, and training topics. The next Field Services Interest Group will meet November 28, 2023, at 3 p.m. Eastern. Email hq@naphsis.org to join the monthly call.

Systems Special Interest Group

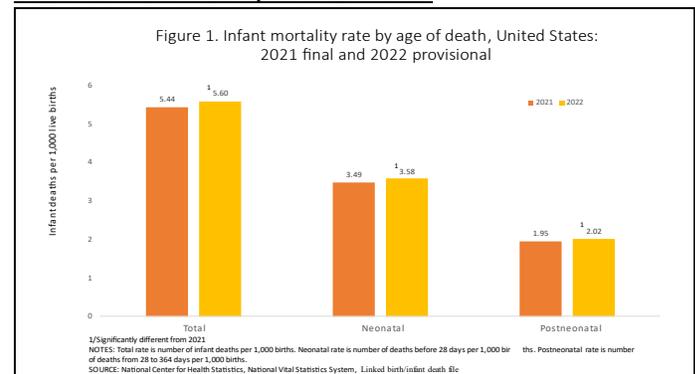
Come ask your technical peers about how they grapple with adjusting their vital records systems to meet the needs of vital records, data partners, and interoperability with other systems. The Systems Special Interest Group will meet at 3 p.m. Eastern on November 30, 2023, and December 28, 2023. The December meeting is subject to change/cancellation. Email systems@naphsis.org to join the monthly call.

Birth Data Quality Workgroup

The Birth Data Quality Workgroup (BDQW) works to assess and improve the quality of vital statistics birth and fetal death data, focusing on improving data at the source (i.e., at the hospital). Email hq@naphsis.org to join the next BDQW December 7, 2023, at 2 p.m. Eastern.

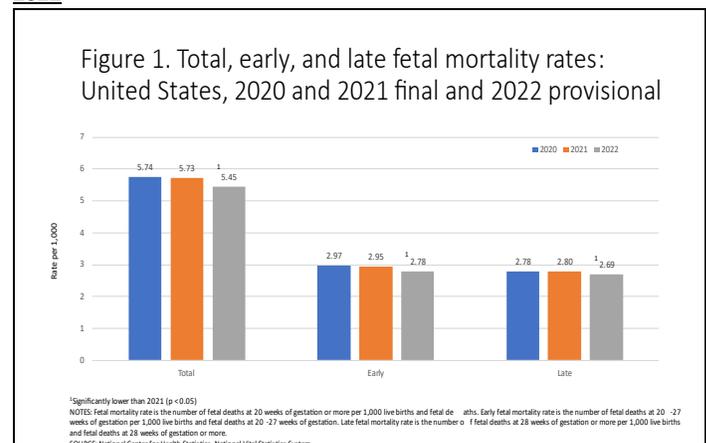
Notable Publications/Data Briefs

Infant Mortality in the United States: Provisional Data From the 2022 Period Linked Birth/Infant Death File



This report was released November 1st and can be found at this [link](#). It presents provisional 2022 data from the linked birth/infant death file. The provisional U.S. infant mortality rate was 5.60 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, 3% higher than the rate for in 2021. Increases were seen in both neonatal (3%) and postneonatal (4%) mortality. Mortality rates rose among infants to American Indian and Alaskan Native non-Hispanic women and White non-Hispanic women and in four states. Other notable results can be found within the report.

Fetal Mortality in the United States: 2020-2021 and 2021-Provisional 2022



This report was released November 8th and can be found at this [link](#). It presents data from the 2022 provisional fetal death file. Between 2021 and 2022, the fetal mortality rate declined 5%, from 5.73 to 5.45. Rates declined for both early (6%) and late fetal deaths (4%). Fetal mortality

rates declined for White non-Hispanic women and Hispanic women and in seven states. Other notable results can be found within the report.

Vital Statistics Modernization Community of Practice



The [Vital Stat. Modernization Community of Practice \(NVSS CoP\)](#) is a shared space for learning and innovation and provides a forum for jurisdictions and their partners working in the modernization space.

Phase III of the NVSS CoP Jurisdictional Outreach effort recently concluded. During this phase, three out of seven non-

participating jurisdictions converted to testing observers for the NCHS-organized September Testing Event for mortality FHIR based interoperability.

The NVSS Modernization Community of Practice organized a successful testing event on September 25th and 26th, 2023. The workflow focus was VRDR IG validation and Canary support. NVSS CoP is proud to report that 26 of 56 (or 46%) of the jurisdictions participated in the testing event, with fifteen (15) jurisdictional Vital Records Offices and their respective technical partners as testers. These included Oregon, Alaska, Nevada, Idaho, Iowa, Illinois, Florida, Maine, Wyoming, Kentucky, New Hampshire, Mississippi, North Mariana Islands, District of Columbia, and Virginia.

Additionally, eleven (11) jurisdictions, including Utah, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Texas, Indiana, New York, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Vermont, and Puerto Rico participated as observers.

Key takeaways from the testing event include:

- An increase of testers has effectively progressed to advanced tiers, especially tier 5 (inter-jurisdictional exchanges).
- New first-time observers, including Massachusetts, Vermont, and Indiana, participated in the testing event.
- CTE played a critical role in this testing event, reporting an increased percentage of business rule clarifications and providing VRDR and canary support, which did not require any fixes to the library.

The next formal NCHS-organized testing event is scheduled for December 4th -5th, 2023. Any jurisdictions interested in more information about the event are encouraged to email the NVSS CoP mailbox at NVSSmodernization@cdc.gov.

The NVSS Modernization CoP continues to work towards the goal that 75% of jurisdictions complete FHIR Certification by the end of 2024. With this in mind, it is important for jurisdictions to remember that **pre-certification and certification** are mandatory steps in the NVSS FHIR Modernization Pathway. Pre-Certification must be completed by jurisdictions before they can attempt Certification. On September 18,

NCHS published the Mortality FHIR Pre-Certification Guidance documents for jurisdictions to use while completing the Pre-Certification process. The documents, including an FAQ on the IJE to FHIR Transition, are available on the CoP SharePoint site.

- Jurisdictions may begin Pre-Certification whenever they are ready; they should notify the NVSSModernization@cdc.gov mailbox when they have begun and when they have completed the Pre-Certification process.
- NCHS will prioritize jurisdictions who have completed Pre-Certification for Certification and expects to be able to certify some jurisdictions earlier than originally estimated. **Timely Pre-Certification is important for maintaining a Jurisdiction's assigned Certification cohort.**

We encourage all jurisdictions who have not signed up for Certification to email nvssmodernization@cdc.gov to request that your jurisdiction be added to the list. As a reminder, Certification will require jurisdictions to demonstrate that FHIR data submissions match IJE data submissions and that the jurisdiction can submit large amounts of FHIR data. Once jurisdictions are certified and in production with FHIR, NCHS will send FHIR messages with the coded resource as a single record response.

Jurisdictions are advised to continue informal testing using their API access between events, post questions to Zulip for technical assistance, and attend the weekly CoP Office Hours. It is important to remember that jurisdictions interested in gaining access to the NVSS API should assign access to the individual completing their development and implementation process. States are asked to send in the contact information of up to two people, including their email, name, and the organization they are representing. If anybody needs to reset their password or request additional staff, please email nvssmodernization@cdc.gov.

NVSS recommends jurisdictions use our peer-to-peer connection for announcements that are of interest to the community of practice, including job vacancies and upcoming conferences. Please feel free to send them to the NVSS mailbox.

Special thanks to NCHS technical partners NAPHSIS, CTE, MITRE, and Ruvos for their ongoing collaboration in the modernization efforts. Their valuable contributions have been instrumental in the success of our recurring meetings and organized testing events.

Vital Staff Spotlights

Jurisdictions may add as many names as they would like to our NCHS Newsletter mailing list! Just send a note to **George Tolson at gct1@cdc.gov** today.

Khaleel Hussaini, Ph.D., was appointed Branch Chief of the Data Acquisition, Classification and Evaluation Branch (DACEB) in the Division of Vital Statistics.

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