

HEALTHY
PEOPLE
2000

Statistics and Surveillance

NCHS Data Users Conference to Focus on the Future

The focus will be on the future at the 1992 Data Users Conference, the sixth in a series of biennial conferences to provide analytical and technical assistance to users of the vital and health statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control.

NCHS will hold its data users conference August 5-7, 1992, in Bethesda, Maryland. The program is comprised of a plenary session, workshops focusing on the Center's major data systems, and special sessions devoted to cross-cutting topics, research initiatives, and current and emerging analytical issues.

The plenary session will address the topic: What Does the Future Hold for the NCHS Data User? NCHS Director Dr. Manning Feinleib will deliver the keynote address. Speakers will consider the changes in the Federal statistical environment, user requirements and needs, the impact of automation, and the changing environment for data collection and analysis.

Individual concurrent workshops will cover the Center's data systems,

with separate sessions geared for new and experienced data users. Several workshop sessions integrate data from a number of systems to address specific areas, such as the family, minority health, aging in America, occupational and environmental health, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). Other sessions are dedicated to conceptual or methodological issues, such as comparability, linkage, and confidentiality.

CDC WONDER is the CDC's online public health information system. The WONDER workshop will provide information and a demonstration on how to access and use the system. NCHS is monitoring the progress toward the *Healthy People 2000* objectives at the national level. A CDC-developed computer inventory of the data bases to track the objectives, including access through WONDER, will be discussed and exhibited in another workshop session.

The research and methodology workshop will feature presentations on

the Questionnaire Design Research Laboratory (QDRL), which investigates cognitive issues related to improving the quality of collection and reporting of national health statistics. Uses and limitations of Survey Data Analysis (SUDAAN), a comprehensive software package for the analysis of survey data; the Integrated Survey Design—use of the National Health Interview Survey as a sampling frame to integrate and coordinate the sample design of all NCHS surveys; and new technologies in statistical cartography and graphics are also part of the QDRL program.

Invitations to the conference will be available in mid-April 1992. There is no registration fee, but advance registration is requested. To receive an invitation and registration packet, contact Barbara Hetzler, Conference Management Staff, NCHS, Room 1100, 6525 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Maryland 20852 or call (301) 436-7122.



Washington State's "Health Objectives and Indicators Tracking System (HOITS)" Developed

by Stephen Kelso, Department of Health, Washington

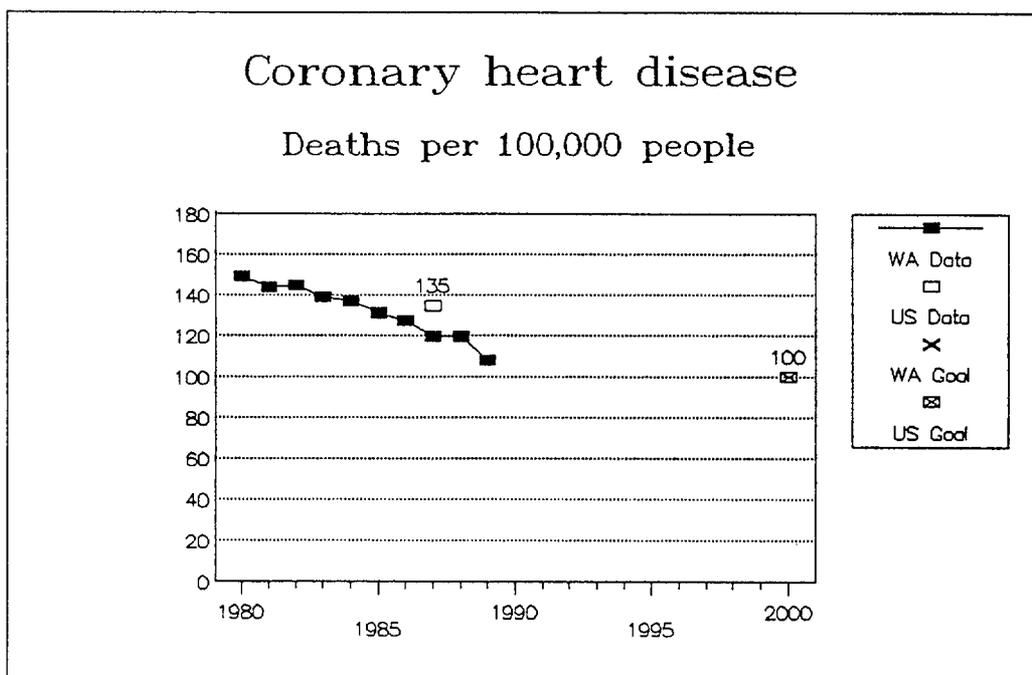
Since May 1990, the Office of Health Policy Support (HPS), with support from the Center for Health Statistics in the Washington Department of Health has been developing a computerized system for tracking health objectives and indicators, emphasizing

the year 2000 national health promotion and disease prevention objectives published by the U.S. Public Health Service in *Healthy People 2000*.

A key feature of the HOITS system is the creation of easily understood reports on individual health objectives.

The reports can combine graphs and text; Washington's data are compared with national data.

Figure 1 shows information on a coronary heart disease objective.



```

TEXT ENTRY FORM      Subject: Coronary heart disease
Id: 01.01***        Measure: Deaths per 100,000 people
Goalarea: 01: Physical Activity and Fitness
Objective: Reduce coronary heart disease deaths.

Narrative: Though the coronary heart disease death rate in the U.S. has
declined 40% in the last 15 years, it still is the leading
cause of death. Modifiable risk factors include smoking, high
cholesterol, high blood pressure, overweight, and physical
inactivity.

Goaltype: hs  Indtype: de  Dups: 1/4  Subs: y  Mults: n  Owner: a  Sex: b
Race: a  Age Range: 0 to 99  Condition: pd  Datasource: WCHS
Datacontact: Pat Starzyk, 6-6028
Datanotes: State and national death rates are age-adjusted to the 1940
U.S. population. 1987 national crude rate: 249. ICD codes:
410-414, 402, 429.2.
    
```

Figure 1. Sample objective text and graph from HOITS

Database design and software

The HOITS database accepts annual State and national data from 1980–2000 and permits listing and sorting of objectives. Target populations are coded by age, sex, and race.

The system is being developed in Paradox 3.5, a DOS-based, relational database program. The program can produce graphs; it is not necessary to export the data to graphics software.

Data entry and documentation

The HOITS database contains text, goals, coding, and national numeric baselines (when available) for each of the objectives in *Healthy People 2000*. HOITS contains 734 records, with duplicate objectives and subobjectives in more than one priority area.

HOITS now contains complete historical data for Washington State (generally from 1980–89) for about 50 objectives. The database documents the sources, formats, and intricacies of data. (See the text of the "Datanotes" field in figure 1.)

Reports and queries

The system permits data output in a variety of reports that can be sent to a computer screen, a printer, or a file. The system will allow virtually unlimited ad-hoc queries. Some sample queries follow:

- List all objectives related to a particular minority population.
- List all objectives with a particular character string (such as "child") in the text of the objective.
- Sort all objectives by the maximum and minimum age of the target population.
- Calculate the difference between the most recent State data and the national data, then sort the objectives to show how Washington compares with the nation.

Continuing system development

HPS staff continues to develop the system in Paradox. HPS staff is working with other Department of Health staff to determine the Department's needs and interests, identify alternative

approaches to system development, and explore topics such as system access, networking, and developing a menu-driven user interface.

Expansions of HOITS application

Although HOITS was designed to reference the *Healthy People 2000* objectives, it is flexible enough to accommodate additional objectives and indicators; data fields can be added or modified. The system could be modified for use by counties, local health departments, or other States.

Since the beginning of the project, staff have sought out contacts at the national and State levels to explore the system's potential uses for, and support from, other organizations.

A detailed description of the system was published in the *Proceedings of the 1991 Public Health Conference on Records and Statistics*. More information is available from Stephen Kelso at the Washington State Department of Health, Box 47812, Olympia, WA 98504-7812, telephone (206) 753-7532.

MICHP Data Conference

The Maternal, Infant, and Child Health Programs Data Analysis and Tracking Approaches Conference was held January 6–8, 1992, in Atlanta, Georgia. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) sponsored the conference; there were 24 cosponsors, including the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs, and the Association for Vital Records and Health Statistics. About 550 people, representing State and local health departments, federal agencies, and academic centers, attended.

The conference was dedicated to the memory of Joel Kleinman, former

director of the Division of Analysis at the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). Dr. Kleinman was world renowned in the field of maternal and infant health. His epidemiologic studies of pregnancy outcome, low birth weight, and infant mortality continue to have major impacts on public policy. Dr. Manning Feinleib, Director, NCHS, gave a memorial address in which he recognized Dr. Kleinman's professional and personal contributions.

Dr. Robert Harmon, Administrator, HRSA, and Dr. William Roper, Director, CDC, opened the meeting by emphasizing the importance of assessment to the maternal and child health (MCH) programs. The keynote address, delivered by Dr. Charles Manahan, State

Health Officer, Florida, set the conference theme of the role of data in addressing the major health problems facing women, infants, and children. Case studies and workshops emphasized creative mechanisms for addressing assessment issues in MCH at State and local levels.

At the final session, attendees from each State prioritized assessment needs for their State. Several themes emerged from these sessions. Needs were frequently noted for linked systems (integrating data from vital statistics, MCH, the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and other programs), for training and technical assistance, and for resource enhancement.

Applied Statistics Training Institute Announces Its First Training Courses

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) will hold the first two short training courses for personnel of State and local health agencies during April and May 1992. NCHS plans to offer a minimum of one course each month through September 1992. The courses will be held at sites around the country. For further information and a list of tentative training sites contact: Sheldon Starr, ASTI Coordinator, National Center for Health Statistics, 6525 Belcrest Road, Room 1100, Hyattsville, Maryland 20782.

Descriptions of the April and May courses follow:

ASTI Course 301 - Epidemiology for Nonepidemiologists

Dates: April 27-29, 1992

Location: Chicago, IL

Course Description: This course will introduce epidemiologic principles for program evaluation, surveillance, health assessment, and other public health applications. The student will learn:

- the strengths and weaknesses of various sources of data;
- the appropriate strategies for obtaining information;
- the analytic techniques for determining risks;
- the interpretation of study results, including biostatistical and epidemiologic concepts and;
- the principles underlying screening programs.

The class will use these principles to assess the strengths and limitations of epidemiologic studies. Students will apply the epidemiologic theory to the

practice of public health, such as measuring progress on the infant mortality or occupational safety and health objectives in *Healthy People 2000*.

Prerequisites: Students should have a basic understanding of public health issues.

Target Audience: All health professionals working in the areas of public health or community organization.

Length of Course: 2½ days

Course Director: Victoria Wells, M.D., D.P.H., Director of Epidemiology, Cincinnati Health Department

ASTI Course 101 - Descriptive Biostatistics

Dates: May 27-29, 1992

Location: New Orleans, LA

Course Description: Descriptive statistics are essential tools for public health workers. After completing this course, the student should be able to:

- calculate and interpret basic descriptive health statistics, including age adjustment procedures, measures of central tendency and dispersion
- recognize the utility of various descriptive statistical measures in order to
- identify and characterize public health data
- process and summarize health data to assess the distribution of disease in the population
- construct and interpret frequency distributions and histograms relevant to health related problems

- understand and use the principles of constructing informative tables, graphs, and charts.

Personal computers are used in the course, but computer experience is not required.

Prerequisites: A bachelor's degree or equivalent biomedical or public health knowledge and experience.

Target Audience: Professional public health workers who have little or no formal statistical training, or people who want to review basic statistical skills.

Length of Course: 2½ days

Course Director: Paul E. Leaverton, Ph.D., Department of Epidemiology and Statistics, College of Public Health, University of South Florida

How to Apply

Moshman Associates, Inc., is assisting NCHS in the coordination of training activities. Application forms for registration in any ASTI course may be obtained by writing, telephoning, or faxing:

Moshman Associates, Inc.
Suite 410, North Tower
7315 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
Telephone: (301) 229-3000
Fax: (301) 961-9553

If you would like an application form faxed to you, please include a fax number. Applications will be reviewed to ensure that the course will meet the needs of the applicant.

Since class size is limited, applications will be accepted in the order that they are received.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
Centers for Disease Control
National Center for Health Statistics
6525 Belcrest Road
Hyattsville, Maryland 20782

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

To receive this publication regularly, contact the National Center for Health Statistics by calling 301-436-8500

DHHS Publication No. (PHS) 92-1236

FIRST CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
PHS/NCHS
PERMIT No. G-281