Using Administrative Data for Health Services Research (M19-5251)

Course Instructor:  Margaret Olsen, PhD, MPH  
Email: molsen@wustl.edu  
Office: 454-8320

TAs:  
Matt Keller, MS  Dustin Stwalley, MA  
e-mail: kellermr@wustl.edu  stwalleyd@wustl.edu  
Phone: 454-8203  286-0226

Dates:  
Spring 1 and 2 (1/17-5/2)  
Thurs 10-1 p.m., 2nd floor, TAB

Course Description and Objectives:
The objective of this advanced graduate course is to prepare students to perform outcomes, comparative effectiveness, and health services research using administrative data. Lectures will cover various types of national and state administrative databases, review journal articles using these databases, instruction in SAS programming, and application of research methods using administrative databases. Strengths and limitations of large databases commonly used for research will be considered, and special attention will be devoted to large databases readily available to new investigators. Students will learn how to link and analyze large databases, understand the key issues related to data security and confidentiality, and become knowledgeable about key methodologic issues in studies using administrative data. Students will develop a research proposal in their own area of interest and complete a short research project that uses administrative data.

Competencies
• Identify the different types of administrative data and understand the origin and completeness of the information available.
• Identify population and other data sources that can be used to augment readily available medical administrative data.
• Understand the validity of data elements in administrative data and what can be done to improve the accuracy of information available.
• Use statistical software to perform common data management steps with large administrative datasets and perform basic analyses.
• Draw appropriate inferences from analysis of administrative data, understanding the limitations of the various datasets.
• Communicate the strengths and limitations of observational studies using administrative data.

Recommended Textbooks (not mandatory):
Alternative: http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/sas/default.htm
ICD-9-CM book (old) – strongly recommended. Available through Amazon for <$10
**Required Software:** SAS Enterprise Guide 7.1 and access to CADR LINUX server

**Expectations**
- Students will have a basic background in epidemiology and biostatics.
- Attendance in lectures, which will be as interactive as possible, is expected.
- Required readings should be read before class each week; they will allow the students to understand the topics in greater depth and enable more active participation in class. Recommended readings provide more detailed information about particular subject areas selected as resources or guidance materials for a specific database or topic of interest. Articles will be selected after the first class based on the background and experience of students.
- Students are required to use SAS statistical software and write basic code.
- There will be a series of short assignments over the course of the semester with a project due at the end of the course.
- Final grades will be based on the assignments below.

**Formal review of journal article (10 points):**
Review journal articles related to administrative data and outcomes, CER, or health services research. Students will present the information in class (~10 minutes). Guidelines for review of article will be provided in class.

**Programming Exercises (30 points total)**
Students will be asked to complete a number of programming exercises to demonstrate mastery of SAS programming. The exercises must be turned in prior to the next class.

**Project Proposal (10 points):**
Students will submit a 1 to 2-paragraph description of their proposed course project (see description below), including the primary research question, proposed study population, and database. Students will be provided timely feedback so that they can take comments into account before finalizing their project.

**Course Project (50 points):**
Students will implement a project, preparing an abstract for poster or oral presentation. The hope is that the topic is of sufficient interest to the student that the presentation becomes a full manuscript after completion of the course. Using HCUP data accessed through the Center for Administrative Data Research, students will examine an outcomes, CER, or health service question. Students will identify a study cohort based on demographic and/or clinical criteria, select relevant data elements from the database, and propose statistical analyses to address the study question. At a minimum, the proposed analyses should include simple descriptive (univariate and bivariate) statistics for the study cohort, such as demographic and clinical characteristics and the main outcomes of interest. Students should do more advanced multivariate statistics, addressing analytic and methodologic issues covered in the course as well as epidemiology and biostatistics courses, such as confounding variables, risk adjustment, clustering of data, and weighting. Due Date: May 10
Mental Health Services are available for full-time students enrolled on the Medical School campus. Students can self-refer to a counselor (phone: 314-362-2404, Option #1 or Option #2); or make an appointment with Dr. Karen Winters through Student Health Services (SHS), telephone: 314-362-3523, and follow the prompts.

There are also contractual mental health service providers who are available off-campus. More information regarding this coverage and a list of participating providers are accessible via https://wusmhealth.wustl.edu/ and then clicking on Students and scrolling down to Mental Health Information https://wusmhealth.wustl.edu/students/mental-health-information/.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to Dr. Winters, 314-362-3523, or to any of our off-campus providers https://wusmhealth.wustl.edu/
**SCHEDULE**

**Jan. 17**
Introduction to Administrative Data and Research – Regulations Measurements, Algorithms

Recommended Articles:


Lucyk K, Tang K, Quan H. Barriers to data quality resulting from the process of coding health information to administrative data: a qualitative study. BMC Health Serv Res 2017;17:766.

**Jan. 24**
SAS Lab – Introduction to SAS, working with HCUP data – Matt Keller

**Jan. 31**
Discharge/Billing Data: Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP) Facility coding
SAS Lab

Recommended Articles:


**Feb. 7**
Validation studies
Brian Gage, MD
SAS Lab
Student Article Presentations – HCUP
Outline of project proposal due
Recommended Articles:


Feb. 14
Claims Data: Private Insurer Data
Student Article Presentations – coding algorithm or validation studies
SAS Lab

Recommended Articles:


Feb. 21
Claims Data: CMS Medicare Data
Student article presentations – private insurer data
SAS Lab
Table 1 due

Recommended Articles:


Feb. 28
Veterans Administration Data - Ziyad Al-Aly, MD (11:00)
Clinical Epidemiology Center, St. Louis VAMC
Student Article Presentations – Medicare data
SAS lab


Mar. 7

Survey and other data – Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey
Kenton Johnston, PhD
St. Louis University College of Public Health and Social Justice
Student Article Presentations – VA data
SAS Lab


Johnston KJ, Hockenberry JM. Are two heads better than one or do too many cooks spoil the broth? Health Serv Res 2016;51:2176-205.

Mar. 14

Measurement and analytic strategies with administrative data I - propensity scores
Student Article Presentations – MCBS or other survey data
SAS Lab


Mar. 21

Medicaid data
Student Article presentations – propensity scores
SAS Lab
Recommended Articles:


Mar. 28
Measurement and analytic strategies with administrative data II - instrumental variables, hierarchical models
Student Article Presentations – Medicaid data
SAS Lab

Recommended Articles:


Apr. 4
Pharmacoepidemiology
Anne Mobley Butler, MPH, PhD
Student Article Presentations – analytic methods
SAS Lab

Recommended Articles:


Apr. 11  Thinking outside the box – additional data for enrichment
Student Article presentations – pharmacoepidemiology
SAS Lab – work on final project

Recommended Articles:


Apr. 18  SAS – work on final project

Apr. 25  Student presentations of final project

May 2  Student presentations of final project