

## North Carolina Hospital Discharge data UNC Cecil G. Sheps Center

### **Overview of UNC Cecil G. Sheps Center:**

The Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research ("Sheps Center") is a unit of the University of North Carolina Division of Health Affairs. The Center's director reports to the Vice Chancellor for Research. Oversight responsibility of the Center is vested in an Advisory Board whose members include senior UNC faculty and administrators from the five health science schools, departments from the Division of Academic Affairs, as well as representatives of the health services community at large. The director receives assistance in planning and leading the Center's activities from five deputy directors, and from research program directors responsible for specific substantive areas of research.

### **Data owner**

Under contract with the NC Division of Health Service Regulation (DHSR), the Sheps Center stores, maintains and analyzes the NC Hospital Discharge data for research use and state health planning. The Hospital Discharge data are owned by DHSR.

### **Data description and collection criteria**

The Hospital Discharge data include Inpatient, Ambulatory Surgery/Outpatient and Emergency Department discharge records from North Carolina hospitals. These data include patient characteristics, clinical information such as diagnosis and procedure codes and length of stay, payer information, charge information, admission source and patient status.

### **Type of data: source data or compiled/abstracted data**

Source data

### **Are the data available to outside parties for analytical purposes?**

Yes, for research.

### **Process to obtain the data for research**

The NC Emergency Department, Inpatient and Ambulatory Surgery/Outpatient databases are not public records, but researchers and graduate students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and other universities, may request access for public health research. Fees may apply. See <http://www.shepscenter.unc.edu/data/nc-hospital-discharge-data/data-access-guidelines/> for a breakdown of fees.

It is recommended to arrange a preliminary discussion with Sheps Center staff prior to submitting a request.

A NC Discharge Request Form must be completed. This request must include:

- Individual name, organization name, contact information
- If student, name of faculty adviser
- Purpose of study or need for data
- Funding source
- IRB information
- Types of information or variables needed

Governor's Highway Safety Program  
Data Documentation Project

- Years of data needed
- Procedures for maintaining confidentiality, data security and storage

Please note that when requesting the standard research file that one of the following three variables MUST be suppressed: ZIP Code, Primary Diagnosis, or Hospital ID. If your project needs require all three, or you want to request additional variables not available in the standard research file, please contact the Sheps Center to discuss prior to submission.

Each request is reviewed for the purpose of approving or denying the request. If approved, a cost estimate will be determined based on the current posted fee structure. Requests are for raw hospital discharge data. Users must have the knowledge and experience to analyze the data.

Response time for fulfilling requests is based on Sheps Center staff and availability. Priority is given to requests that involve obligations or contracts for research or other project grants that would be jeopardized if the data were not made available in a specified time frame. Current wait time for analytic data is several months.

Once approval is granted, individual(s) will be required to read, sign and abide by the Cecil G. Sheps Center's NC Hospital Discharge Data Use Agreement for the North Carolina Discharge Databases.

**Website**

<http://www.shepscenter.unc.edu/data/nc-hospital-discharge-data/>

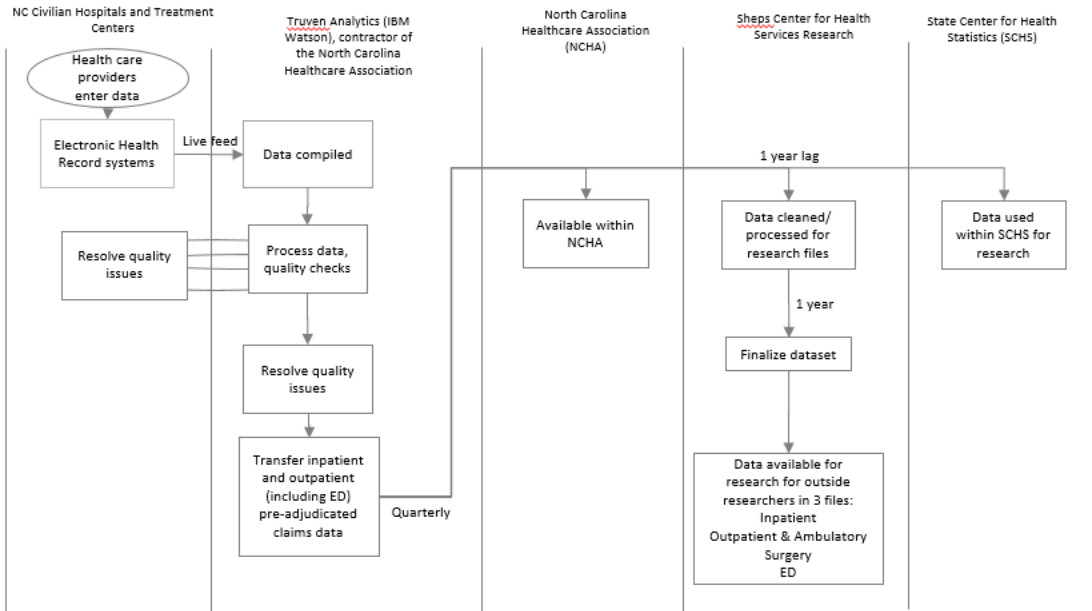
**Contact(s)**

Roger Akers, MS  
Deputy Director for Data Mgt and Information Technology  
Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
919-966-7188  
[akers@unc.edu](mailto:akers@unc.edu)

Abigail Hayden, MPH, PhD  
Research Program Manager  
NC TraCS Institute  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
919-966-6879  
[ahaydon@email.unc.edu](mailto:ahaydon@email.unc.edu)

Governor's Highway Safety Program  
Data Documentation Project

## Data Flowchart



**Who enters the original data (Highway patrol officers, Healthcare providers, etc.)?**

Healthcare providers, billing coders

**Injury classification: Injury classification method (ICD-10-CM, etc.)**

Diagnosis codes (ICD-9-CM and ICD-10-CM) and procedure codes (CPT)

**Collection timeframe: when the data were entered after original event**

The data are collected in real time at hospitals then extracted and submitted to Truven Health Analytics annually.

**Years available: Description of timespan for which data are available**

ED data:

- FY 2007-2016: data from Truven Health Analytics

Inpatient data:

- FY 1989-1994: data from the Medical Database Commission
- FY 1995: data not available
- FY 1996-2016: data from Truven Health Analytics

Ambulatory Surgery/Outpatient data:

- FY 1997-2016: data from Truven Health Analytics

Fiscal years are October 1-September 30

**Data History: Key changes in the data that would affect research use**

Beginning FY2016 (October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016) the NC Discharge Data has ICD-10-

Governor's Highway Safety Program  
Data Documentation Project

CM diagnosis and procedure codes rather than ICD-9-CM codes. Hospitals were not required to report race and ethnicity data until 2011. Concerns remain about the accuracy of the race and ethnicity data.

**Are data dictionaries available?**

Yes

**Dictionaries**

Dictionaries are available online: <http://www.shepscenter.unc.edu/data/nc-hospital-discharge-data/data-dictionaries/>

2016\_NC\_ED\_DataDictionary\_researcher

2016\_NC\_Inpatient\_DataDictionary\_researcher

2016\_NC\_Outpatient\_DataDictionary\_researcher

**Field Mapping from Source Documentation**

**Source documentation field map**

Report labels	Source labels (where available)
Table or category	
Field	Label
Field-Literal	Variable
Description	Label
Source comments	
Format	Type
Length	Len
Required (Y/N)	
Sensitive (Y/N)	
Unique key (Y/N)	
Retired Field (Y/N)	
Retired Date	

**Additional fields available in source documentation**

None

**Quality and Performance Measures**

**Known data quality issues**

There are concerns about the accuracy of the race and ethnicity data.