

# VA HEALTH ECONOMICS BULLETIN

A VA Health Services Research & Development Resource Center

Volume 13, Issue 4  
November, 2013



## Inside

[Estimates of New Coverage Options for Uninsured Veterans under ACA](#)

[HERC Funding Renewed](#)

[New Steering Committee Members](#)

[Updated Budget Impact Analysis Guidelines](#)

[HERC Staff Update](#)

[Cyber Seminars & Course](#)

The VA Health Economics Bulletin is a quarterly publication of the Health Economics Resource Center (HERC) to bring VA researchers updates on datasets and data sources.

For more information on VA datasets, visit the HERC web page for Guidebooks and Technical Reports at <http://www.herc.research.va.gov/publications>.

For economics-related questions, please view our *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)* web page at <http://www.herc.research.va.gov/resources/faq.asp>.

For economics advice, please call the HERC consulting service at (650) 617-2630 or email us at [herc@va.gov](mailto:herc@va.gov).

## Estimates of New Coverage Options for Uninsured Veterans under ACA

On November 21, 2013 Urban Institute researchers Jennifer Haley and Genevieve Kenney, Ph.D. will host a special cyber seminar on the new insurance coverage options available to uninsured Veterans and their family members under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). They will share findings from their recent report on the estimated number of currently uninsured Veterans who can gain new Medicaid coverage due to provisions in ACA.

Genevieve M. Kenney, PhD, is Co-Director and a Senior Fellow in the Health Policy Center of

the Urban Institute. Dr. Kenney is a nationally renowned expert on Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the broader health insurance coverage and health issues facing low-income children and families. Jennifer Haley is a Research Associate in the Health Policy Center of the Urban Institute. Her recent research has focused on child and adult participation in Medicaid and in CHIP and the implications under ACA.

This cyber seminar is designed to help the VA community understand the role of expanded

Medicaid eligibility in covering low-income Veterans and to help stimulate new questions on impacts of ACA on Veterans for HSR&D research. Ms. Haley and Dr. Kenney will present the findings from two Urban Institute reports on uninsured Veterans and family members and will also outline their various coverage options under ACA, including Medicaid/CHIP and exchange coverage, as well as VA coverage. Following the presentation there will be a discussion from Duane Fleming and DeAnn Farr, PhD, from the VHA

*(Continued on page 3)*



Dedicated to improving the quality of health economics research

## HERC Funding Renewed

The Health Services Research & Development (HSR&D) service of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has renewed funding for the Health Economics Resource Center (HERC) through fiscal year (FY) 2018. For the next five years, HERC will continue to train and advise health services researchers and operational partners, create new economic datasets, and make VA data sources more accessible to researchers.

In FY14-18 HERC will focus its resources on three new initiatives. First, we will work to accommodate

the data transition to the VA Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW)/VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure (VINCI) environment by moving our datasets—including HERC average cost, person-level, and DSS inpatient discharge datasets—from the Austin Information Technology Center Mainframe to CDW. Later, we will update our dataset documentation to reflect CDW/VINCI-specific changes, including data access, data format and data use in the CDW/VINCI environment.

Second, HERC will develop more user friendly products that are tailored to new and

aspiring economic researchers. We will identify the needs of new and aspiring economic researchers by conducting focus groups to better understand aspiring economic researchers' needs. Focus groups will be asked to evaluate ideas for product redesign to improve access and usability. We will use the feedback from the focus groups to update existing products and create new products.

Finally, HERC will work to make economics more useful to VA by convening economic research planning workgroups that link HSR&D economics researchers with VHA opera-

tions offices that have a need for economic expertise. We will work with operations partners to determine their need for economic expertise, to develop a researchable question, to identify HSR&D economists with an interest and expertise in the area, and to convene a workgroup of both HSR&D economists and VHA operations partners. In consultation with the HERC steering committee, we will form at least one new workgroup each fiscal year with a specific focus, beginning with the impact of the Affordable Care Act on demand for VHA services.

## New Steering Committee Members

HERC added leaders from VHA operations and new research centers to its steering committee. The new members are John Fortney, Ph.D., Steven Fu, M.D., and Glenn Graham, M.D.

Dr. Fortney leads a multi-project research program to enhance veteran access to and engagement in mental health services. This pro-

gram is one of the ten newly funded programs under the HSR&D Collaborative Research to Enhance and Advance Transformation and Excellence (CREATE) initiative. Dr. Fu directs an HSR&D center in Minneapolis that is focusing on chronic disease management in primary care. Minneapolis is one of 19 Centers of Innovation (COINs) recently approved

by HSR&D. Dr. Graham is a Consultant in the Office of Specialty Care Transformation, the Deputy National Director of Neurology Service, and the Specialty Care Lead in the Sierra Pacific Network (VISN 21). VA HSR&D researchers Amy Rosen, Ph.D., of Boston and Peter Groeneveld, M.D., of Philadelphia will continue to serve on the steering committee,

and will act as the committee's co-chairs.

The newly appointed members take the place of Matthew Maciejewski, Ph.D., Sarah Krein, Ph.D., Joan Penrod, Ph.D., and Eugene Oddone, M.D., who will rotate off the committee after several years of providing helpful advice to HERC.

## Updated Budget Impact Analysis Guidelines

The International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) Task Force on Good Research Practices will soon be releasing updated guidelines for conducting budget impact analyses, replacing the guidelines originally released in 2007.

To educate the VA community about the updated budget impact analysis guidelines, Josephine Mauskopf, PhD, MHA, the co-chair of the ISPOR task force on budget impact analysis, will present in the HERC Health Economics Cyber Seminar series on January 15, 2014 at 11:00am PT (2:00pm ET). This presentation is targeted at those who use budget impact analyses including those who manage and plan health care budgets, such as administrators of national or regional

health care programs, of private health insurance plans, and of health-care delivery organizations, or employers who pay directly for health care.

Dr. Mauskopf is the Vice President of Health Economics at RTI Health Solutions with extensive experience as both a consultant and an employee within the pharmaceutical industry. She has designed pharmacoeconomic research programs and estimated the cost-effectiveness and budget impact of new health care interventions in many therapeutic areas, including infectious and neurodegenerative diseases.

A budget impact analysis of a new health care intervention is commonly conducted in order to estimate the financial consequences of adoption and diffusion of

the intervention within a specific health care setting. The updated guidelines, “Principles of Good Practice for Budget Impact Analysis II: Report of the ISPOR Task Force on Good Research Practices – Budget Impact Analysis,” will be published in the January/February 2014 issue of *Value in Health* at [http://www.ispor.org/valueinhealth\\_index.asp](http://www.ispor.org/valueinhealth_index.asp). The report will present guidance on methodologies for those conducting budget impact analyses and for those reviewing budget impact analysis results.

For more information, visit the HERC website at <http://www.herc.research.va.gov>. To register visit the HSR&D Cyber Seminar website at <http://www.hsrdr.research.va.gov/Cyberseminars>.

## Staff Update

John Cashy joined HERC as a programmer in August 2013. He earned a PhD in Mathematics at Ohio State University, and has worked as a statistician at the Feinberg School of Medicine (Northwestern University) in the Departments of Urology and Internal Medicine, in the anti-fraud division of Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois, and at Evanston Northwestern Healthcare’s Center for Outcomes Research & Education. John also taught courses in statistics and mathematics at Loyola University Chicago and Northwestern University.

Jen Liao joined HERC as a Research Assistant in October 2013. She received her BA in Neuroscience from Pomona College in 2011 and has previously held research positions in a memory and learning lab at Pomona and in a health informatics research group at VA Palo Alto. Long-term, Jen hopes to go to medical school. In her spare time, Jen likes participating in triathlons, rock climbing, going on outdoor adventures and playing guitar.

*(Continued from page 1)*

### Estimates of New Coverage Options for Uninsured Veterans under ACA (continued)

Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health Policy and Planning on the significance of this new coverage for VA care and research.

This HERC Cyber Seminar will be held on Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup> at 9:00am PT (12:00pm ET). For more information, please visit the HERC website at <http://www.herc.research.va.gov>. To register for the cyber seminar, please visit the HSR&D Cyber Seminar website at <http://www.hsrdr.research.va.gov/Cyberseminars>.

## HERC

The Health Economics Resource Center produces pioneering, rigorous health economics and related research that improves health care within and beyond VA.

Our research activities include innovation and excellence in:

- Performing cost and cost-effectiveness analyses
- Studying the efficiency of health care
- Evaluating health programs and interventions
- Planning, managing, and analyzing randomized clinical trials
- Health care decision modeling
- Assessing health-related quality of life
- Health economics and health services research

We are committed to:

- Integrity
- High quality of work
- Productivity
- Transparency
- Mutual trust and respect
- Teamwork
- Investment in people through learning and mentoring
- A flexible, supportive, and enjoyable work environment



**Health Economics Resource Center**  
VA Palo Alto Health Care System  
795 Willow Road (152 MPD)  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Phone: (650) 617-2630  
Fax: (650) 617-2639  
Email: [herc@va.gov](mailto:herc@va.gov)

Visit us online at:  
<http://www.herc.research.va.gov>

## HERC Cyber Course and Seminars

Each hourly session begins at 11:00am Pacific (2:00pm Eastern), unless otherwise noted.

Register: <http://www.hsrc.research.va.gov/Cyberseminars>

Schedule & archives: <http://www.herc.research.va.gov/training/>

### Cyber Seminars

The Health Economics Cyber Seminars feature presentations on a variety of health economics and health services topics.

**Thursday, November 21, 2013 at 9:00am PT / 12:00pm ET**

**Uninsured Veterans and Family members: National and State Estimates and New Coverage Options under the Affordable Care Act (ACA)**

*Jennifer Haley*, Research Associate

*Genevieve Kenney, Ph.D.*, Co-Director & Senior Fellow  
Health Policy Center, Urban Institute

**January 15, 2014**

**Updated ISPOR Guidelines for Performing Budget Impact Analyses**

*Josephine Mauskopf, Ph.D.*

Vice President Health Economics, RTI Health Solutions

**January 15, 2014**

**Hospital Profiling with Enhanced Risk Adjustment Based on Laboratory Test and Vital Signs Data**

*Amresh Hanchate, Ph.D.*, Economist, VA Boston

*Ann Borzecki, M.D., M.P.H.*, Investigator, Bedford VA

### Econometrics with Observational Data

This course is intended to provide an introduction to econometric methods used to analyze data in health services research. **Target audience:** Researchers who would like an introduction to economic methods for observational studies in health services research. Course material will assume knowledge of basic probability and statistics and familiarity with the linear regression model.

**November 13, 2013 Limited Dependent Variables**

*Ciaran Phibbs, Ph.D.*

**November 20, 2013 Cost as the Dependent Variable (Part I)**

*Paul Barnett, Ph.D.*

**December 4, 2013 Cost as the Dependent Variable (Part II)**

*Paul Barnett, Ph.D.*

## HERC Staff

### Director

Paul Barnett, Ph.D.

### Associate Director

Todd Wagner, Ph.D.

### Health Economists

Christine Pal Chee, Ph.D.

Risha Gidwani, Dr.P.H.

Ciaran Phibbs, Ph.D.

Patricia Sinnott, P.T., Ph.D., M.P.H.

Jean Yoon, Ph.D.

### Administrative Officer

Yoko Ogawa, B.S.

### Associate Staff

Lakshmi Ananth, M.S.

John Cashy, Ph.D.

Shuo Chen, Ph.D.

Adam Chow, B.A.

Elizabeth Cowgill, M.P.H.

Sharon Dally, M.S.

Nicole Flores, B.A.

Vilija Joyce, M.S.

Vera Katseva, Ph.D.

Jennifer Liao, B.A.

Jeanie Lo, M.P.H.

Susan Schmitt, Ph.D.

Pon Su, M.S.