

2015 | DATA USER'S GUIDE: COST SUPPLEMENT FILE



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05/22/2018	1.0	Initial version published.
09/24/2020	1.1	In section 3.3, clarified the payment source of AMTCARE on each event-level segment as either Medicare FFS or Medicare Part D.

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ACRONYM LIST

ADLs	Activities of Daily Living
ATC	Access to Care
CAU	Cost and Use
CMMI	Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation
CMS	Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
CPS	Charge Payment Summary
DME	Durable Medical Equipment
EDB	Medicare Enrollment Data Base
EOBs	Explanation of Benefit Statements
ESRD	End-stage renal disease
FDB	First Databank
FFS	Fee-for-Service
FI	Field Interviewer
FM	Field Manager
FPL	Federal poverty level
HCPCS	Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System
HFQ	Health Functioning and Status
HHA	Home health agency
HHC	Health and Health Care of the Medicare Population
HICN	Health Insurance Claim Number
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HMO	Health Maintenance Organization
HS	Health Status
IAQ	Income and Assets Questionnaire
ID	Identification
IADLs	Instrumental activities of daily living
IRB	Institutional Review Board
IRQ	Interviewer Remarks Questionnaire
KNQ	Knowledge of Beneficiaries
LDS	Limited Data Sets
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MA	Medicare Advantage
MAPD	Medicare Advantage Part D Plan
MB	Medicare Beneficiary
MBQ	Mobility of Beneficiaries
MBSF	Master Beneficiary Summary File
MCO	Managed Care Organization
MCBS	Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey
MDS	Minimum Data Set
MIF	Master Index File
MMA	Medicare Modernization Act
NCH	National Claims History repository
NDC	National Drug Code
NHATS	National Health and Aging Trends Study
Non PM	Non Prescription Medicine
NORC	NORC at the University of Chicago
NSQ	No-Statement Section Questionnaire
OEDA	Office of Enterprise Data and Analytics

OM	Other Medical Expenses
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OTP	Outpatient Hospital
PAQ	Patient Activation
PDE	Part D Event
PDP	Part D Plan
PM	Prescription Medicine
PPIC	Patient Perceptions of Integrated Care
PPO	Preferred Provider Organization
PQV	Preventive Care module
PSU	Primary Sampling Units
PUF	Public Use File
QMB	Qualified Medicare Beneficiary
RESTMLN	Residence Timeline segment
RIC	Record Identification Code
RXQ	Drug Coverage
SAQ	Self-Administered Questionnaire
SAS®	Statistical Analysis System
SCF	Sample Control File
SD	Separate billing doctor
SL	Separate billing lab
SLMB	Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiaries
SNF	Skilled Nursing Facility
SOP	Source of Payment
SSNs	Social Security Numbers
STQ	Statement Section Questionnaire
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USQ-PPIC	Usual Source of Care/Patient Perceptions of Integrated Care
VA	Veterans' Administration

INTRODUCTION

The MCBS Cost Supplement File provides cost and utilization data that can be linked to the MCBS Survey File to conduct analyses on health care costs and utilization for the beneficiaries in the survey. Beginning with the release of 2015 data files, Cost Supplement File users will require the Survey File for information on beneficiaries' demographic characteristics, survey reported covariates, and health insurance information. In keeping with best practices of data management, each variable will exist on only one MCBS LDS (i.e., the Survey File or Cost Supplement File).

The MCBS Cost Supplement File links Medicare claims to survey-reported events and aims to provide complete expenditure and source of payment data on all health care services, including those not covered by Medicare. The MCBS Cost Supplement File provides a comprehensive picture of health services received, amounts paid, and sources of payment. The file can support a broader range of research and policy analyses on the Medicare population than would not be possible using either survey data or administrative claims data alone.

The Cost Supplement File undergoes a careful reconciliation process to separately identify and flag health care services reported: 1) from the survey alone, 2) from the Medicare Fee-for-Service (FFS) and Part D claims data alone, and 3) from both sources. Survey-reported data include information on the cost and utilization of all types of medical services including those not covered by Medicare, as well as payments by supplementary health insurance and Medicare Part C/Medicare Advantage. Medicare claims data includes cost and utilization information on inpatient hospitalizations, outpatient hospital care, physician services, home health care, durable medical equipment, skilled nursing home services, hospice care, and prescription drugs.

In general, the Cost Supplement File will be released at least 15 to 18 months after data collection has ended and final administrative and claims data are available. CMS will release the Cost Supplement File approximately three months after the Survey File with the Survey File typically released in summer and the Cost Supplement File in the fall.

For questions about the Cost Supplement data release, please contact MCBS@cms.hhs.gov.

Contents of the Data User's Guide – Cost Supplement File

This manual contains detailed information about the Cost Supplement File and specific background information to help data users in understanding and analyzing the data.

1. What's New in 2015 – This section describes key MCBS Questionnaire changes and other highlights for the data year.
2. Section 1: File Structure – This section includes a technical description of the specifications and structure of the file and a brief description of the record types in the file.
3. Section 2: Data File Documentation – This section provides information on the content of the data file including instructions on reading in the data.
4. Section 3: Data File Notes – This section provides an overview of each file included in the release, a description of derived variables, and any changes from previous releases or special highlights for data users.

What's New in 2015?

For 2015 MCBS data, CMS will release a Public Use File (PUF) and two Limited Data Sets (LDS). Data users will notice that the 2015 MCBS LDS files are renamed and reorganized from prior years. The LDS releases moving forward will be referred to as the Survey File (formerly Access to Care (ATC)) and the Cost Supplement File (formerly Cost and Use (CAU)).

The data within the LDS releases are also reorganized into freshly named segments (formerly RICs). In this Guide, [Section 1.2: File Structure](#) provides a crosswalk from historical RIC segments to the new 2015 segment names.

Questionnaire Changes

Below data users will note highlights and updates for the 2015 data year related to the Cost Supplement File LDS. In 2015, there were a number of Community Questionnaire changes pertaining to administration and to item- and section-level updates. Please see the Data User's Guide: General Information for additional changes that occurred in the data year. For detailed information about the 2015 MCBS Survey File LDS, please also see the Data User's Guide: Survey File. Data User's Guides are available on CMS' MCBS website at <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/MCBS/Codebooks.html>.

Community Questionnaire Administrative Changes

- In 2015, the winter/summer rounds were combined into one longer round rather than two distinct data collection periods. This was a one-time alteration to the typical data collection protocol of three rounds of data collected annually – winter, summer, and fall.
- Furthermore, due to the combination of winter and summer rounds in 2015, slightly different rules applied for the exiting panel. The final (12th) interview is generally abbreviated and does not entail any cost or utilization sections. However, in Winter/Summer 2015, the exiting panel's final interview was the 11th interview, which was similar to a standard Continuing interview. These respondents received the same interview flow as would a standard Continuing case with updated scripts during the Exit section of the questionnaire to indicate that this would be the final interview.

Summary of Item- and Section-Level Questionnaire Updates

In addition to questionnaire administration changes, several item and section level changes were made in 2015.

Charge Payment Summary (CPS)

The Charge Payment Summary (CPS) reviews outstanding cost information reported from previous rounds. For example, if the respondent reported in the previous interview that he/she expected to receive an insurance statement for a particular event, then this event is carried forward to the next round CPS and the respondent is asked if s/he has additional detail about the charges associated with that event.

The scope of CPS was slightly reduced for the 2015 data collection year. In prior years, there were eight distinct reasons why a cost record could be flagged for follow up in CPS. The majority of costs fall into three categories, so in 2015, only costs with those three most common CPS reasons were flagged for follow up.

Dental Utilization (DUQ)

Two follow-up items were added to this section for respondents reporting no dental utilization. These items captured whether the beneficiary needed dental care but could not get it, and if so, the reasons why the beneficiary could not obtain dental care. For respondents reporting a dental event, items in the DUQ were modified and added to capture the type of dental provider visited and the type of procedure received.

Variable Name Changes

Several variables that are found on multiple segments will be renamed in 2015. These variables are listed below. The reason for this name change is to consistently rename all Medicare HMO references to Medicare Advantage/Medicare Part C.

The following variables will be renamed, and their labels updated as indicated below:

- AMTHMOM -> AMTMADV: Amount paid by Medicare MCO/HMO
- IMPSHMOM -> IMPSMADV: AMTMADV payment source imputed
- IMPAHMOM -> IMPAMADV: AMTMADV payment amount imputed
- AAMTHMOM -> AAMTMADV: Adjustd sum of Medicare MCO/HMO payments
- SAMTHMOM -> SAMTMADV: Unadjustd sum of Medicare MCO/HMO paymnts
- PAMTHMOM -> PAMTMADV: Adjustd sum of Medicare MCO/HMO payments
- HMO -> MCOHMO: Event provided by an MCO/HMO

Analytic Notes for Non-PM Event Segments

The non-PM event level data records, which are excluded from the summaries, are now flagged by the variable SOWMP = 1 (SOWMP is Survey Only With Medicare Payment). This, combined with the inclusion of event level Hospice data (also new for 2015), allows the data user to sum the event level data to the unadjusted summary level (the SAMT variables). To accomplish this equivalency, the user must exclude the SOWMP = 1 records from the event level dataset.

Also NEW for 2015: The SOWMP flag was not turned on, and the records were not excluded from the summaries if there was an observed or imputed Medicare Advantage (MA) payment for these unmatched records with Medicare payments. That is, records were excluded from the summaries if the event was an unmatched survey reported event with a Medicare payment, but no MA payment.

1. FILE STRUCTURE

1.1 LDS Contents

The following information is represented in the MCBS Cost Supplement File:

- Survey-reported data including information on the cost and utilization of medical services, including all sources of payment and out-of-pocket costs.
- Medicare FFS and prescription drug claims data including administrative and billing information on the cost and utilization of inpatient hospitalizations, outpatient hospital care, physician services, home health care, durable medical equipment, skilled nursing home services, hospice care, and prescription drugs.

1.2 File Structure

The Cost Supplement File data are provided at three different levels of summarization: Event level, Person Summary level (PS), and Service Summary (SS) level. The tri-level structure allows analysts to fit the research problem they are addressing to the available file summary levels, and potentially avoid having to process all the detailed event records in the file when summaries may suffice. For example, an analysis of differences in total health spending per person between men and women could use the PS level, and thereby avoid having to process the more numerous event level records. Similarly, an analysis of differences in use of Medicare hospital payments by race could use the SS records. Analysts could use Event level records for more detailed analyses, for example, average length of long-term facility stays or average reimbursements per prescription drug type. Users should determine whether a segment that already summarized costs, utilization, and payment distributions would best serve the analysis.

In summary, the Cost Supplement segments are assembled at three levels:

1. The Event level reports all payers, costs and utilization at the most detailed level available. Service types at the Event level are dental (DUE), facility (FAE), medical provider (MPE), inpatient hospital (IPE), outpatient hospital (OPE), institutional events (IUE), and prescription medicine events (PME).
2. The Service Summary level summarizes all payers, costs, and utilization for a person at the service level. There are nine service categories: dental, facility, home health, hospice, medical provider, inpatient hospital, institutional, outpatient hospital, and prescribed medicines. Note that home health and hospice services are only included at the service and person level; there is no event level data for provided for these two services. Within each type of service record, separate payer totals for eleven different payers are also shown. Payer totals are summarized in two ways: once summarizing the event level records, and in adjusted form. The adjusted totals correct for any survey interviewing gaps during the year. The service summaries are adjusted to exclude unmatched survey event records that are considered duplicative of unmatched Medicare bill record events. [See Event Level Matching and Adjusting for Missing Days and Undated Services in Appendix C: Technical Appendices].
3. The Person Summary level summarizes all payers and costs across service categories and summarizes type of service amounts. These records show only one total for each person, service and payer. Again, payment amounts are shown two ways: as summarized from event records, and adjusted to compensate for Medicare covered days that were not covered by interview reference periods.

All MCBS records begin with the same three variables: the survey reference year (in this release, a constant "2015"), version, and a unique number that identifies the person who was sampled (the BASEID). The BASEID provides the link to the other segments within the Cost Supplement and Survey File LDS releases. To obtain complete survey information for an individual, an analyst must link together records for that individual from the various data files using the variable BASEID. Beneficiaries may not have a record on every data file. Exhibit 1.2 provides an overview of the Cost Supplement File segments.

Exhibit 1.2: 2015 Contents of Cost Supplement File Data Release

Cost Supplement Segment	Abbrev	Description/Universe	Historic RIC Segment	Unit of Observation
Dental Utilization Events	DUE	This file contains individual dental events for the MCBS population. The unit of measurement is a single visit to the dentist.	DUE	One record per event per beneficiary
Facility Events	FAE	This file includes individual facility events for the MCBS population. There is one record for each stay that occurred at least partly in the data year. The unit of measurement is a "stay" in a nursing home or other long term care facility.	FAE	One record per beneficiary per stay
Inpatient Hospital Events	IPE	This file contains individual inpatient hospital events for the MCBS population. The unit of measurement is a single admission.	IPE	One record per beneficiary per admission
Institutional Events	IUE	This file contains individual short-term facility (usually skilled nursing facility) stays for the MCBS population that were reported during a community interview or created from Medicare claims data. The unit of measurement is a single admission.	IUE	One record per beneficiary per admission

Cost Supplement Segment	Abbrev	Description/Universe	Historic RIC Segment	Unit of Observation
Medical Provider Events	MPE	This file contains individual events for a variety of medical services, equipment, and supplies. The unit of measurement is a separate visit, procedure, service, or a supplied item for a survey reported event.	MPE	One record per beneficiary per event
Outpatient Hospital Events	OPE	This file contains individual outpatient hospital events for the MCBS population. The unit of measurement is a separate visit to any part of the outpatient department for a survey-reported event.	OPE	One record per beneficiary per event
Prescribed Medicine Events	PME	This file contains individual outpatient prescribed medicine events for the MCBS population. The unit of measurement is a single purchase of a single drug in a single container.	PME	One record per beneficiary per single drug purchase/fill
Person Summary	PS	Summarization of utilization and expenditures by type of service and summarization of expenditures by payer, yielding one record per person.	PS	One record per beneficiary
Service Summary	SS	Summarization of the seven individual event files along with home health and hospice utilization, yielding a total of nine summary records per person.	SS	Nine records per beneficiary

Cost Supplement Segment	Abbrev	Description/Universe	Historic RIC Segment	Unit of Observation
Residence Timeline	RESTMLN	The RESTMLN segment provides a timeline of each setting in which a beneficiary resided over the course of the year. The 2015 segment is included with the Cost Supplement LDS for data year 2015 only, as it was constructed using the Cost Supplement population. For the 2016 data year and beyond, the segment will be included with the Survey File LDS.	6, 9, A, K	One record per beneficiary
Cost Supplement Ever Enrolled Weights	CSEVWGTS	This file includes full-sample and replicate weights representing the 2015 ever enrolled population to use for cross-sectional research.	X	One record per beneficiary

2. DATA FILE DOCUMENTATION

2.1 Contents of the LDS

The Cost Supplement File consists of a series of separate files known as segments. In addition to the segments, CMS provides technical documentation with the following resources for data users:

- Codebooks
- Questionnaires
- Data files (SAS®, CSV)
- Format control files

CMS provides technical assistance to researchers interested in using MCBS data, and provides free consultation to users interested in obtaining these data products and using these data in research. Users can email MCBS@cms.hhs.gov with questions regarding obtaining the data and with questions regarding using the data.

2.2 LDS Components

2.2.1 Codebooks

Codebooks are included with each data release and serve as the key resource for comprehensive information on all variables within a data file release. The codebooks list the variables in each of the segments, the possible values, and unweighted frequencies.

The following information is provided within each Codebook:

- Variable: The codebook contains the variable names that we have associated with the final version of our data files. Certain conventions apply to the variable names.
- Format Name: This column identifies the format name associated with the variable in the SAS® dataset for this variable's data file.
- Frequency: This column shows unweighted frequency counts of values or recodes for each variable.
- Label (Variable label and codes): The variable label provides an explanation of the variable, which describes it more explicitly than would be possible in only eight letters. For coded variables all of the possible values of the variable appear in lines beneath that explanation. Associated with each possible value (in the column labeled "Frequency") is a count of the number of times that the variable had that value, and, under the column labeled "Label", a short format expanding on the coded value.

Notes:

The Cost Supplement data comes from summarized information from MCBS Questionnaire items as well as imputed data. On Cost Supplement File segments, data users will find imputation flag variables where applicable.

Many questionnaire items were posed to elicit simple "Yes" or "No" answers, or to limit responses to one choice from a list of categories. In these cases the responses are "Yes" or "No" or one of the codes from the list. In other questions the respondent was given a list of items to choose from and all of the responses were recorded. In these cases each of the responses is coded "Indicated"/"Selected" or "Not Indicated"/"Not Selected".

If a respondent provided an answer that was not on the list of possible choices, it was recorded verbatim. All of the verbatim responses were reviewed and categorized. New codes were added to the original list of options to accommodate verbatim responses that appeared frequently. For this reason, the list of possible values for some variables may not exactly match the questionnaire.

2.2.2 Questionnaires

Data users can view the questionnaire for each data year along with questionnaire variable names and question text on the MCBS website at: <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/MCBS/Questionnaires.html>.

2.3 Data Edits and Imputation

2.3.1 Data Edits

A series of edits are conducted on the data files to check the data for accuracy, completeness, and reasonableness. These checks involve the structure and content of the data. Edits are conducted to correct obvious erroneous values, such as a report of having the same health care plan for 500 years.

Column and row checks are conducted to confirm each analytic file is structurally sound. Column checks include confirming that all necessary variables are on the file, checking variable attributes, and identifying high rates of missingness or out of range values. Row checks include confirming the inclusion of expected beneficiary IDs and checking for duplicate or missing primary and foreign keys. Any structural issues are addressed either during data extraction or data cleaning.

Logic and reasonableness checks are also performed for each data file. Logic checks verify that the questionnaire worked according to specifications, particularly with respect to questionnaire routing. Errors identified during logic checking result in two categories of data edits: flagging values that were incorrectly skipped or setting incorrectly populated values to null to indicate a valid missing.

Global edits are applied to edit unreasonable or impossible extreme values, to bind the data to reasonable responses, and to check for values that are not explicitly disallowed by the questionnaire. For example, male respondents should not report female-only conditions, like cervical cancer. Consistency checks and edits are also conducted. If a respondent reports becoming Medicare eligible due to a certain condition, then they should have reported having that condition. Based on a thorough data review, these types of errors are corrected during data cleaning.

Once data review and issue resolution are complete for each data file, the data are run through a cleaning program. During data cleaning, edits are applied to the filtered data files, and additional quality control is conducted to ensure that the edits applied correctly. A flag variable is created for each edit to indicate whether the variable was edited for a particular observation.

Certain conventions were used in coding all variables to distinguish between questions that beneficiaries would not or could not answer and questions that were not asked. These conventional codes are depicted in Exhibit 2.3.1.

Exhibit 2.3.1: Data Review and Editing Codes

Value	Format	Meaning
.	INAPPLICABLE	Valid missing, inapplicable, a valid skip, missing with no expectation that a value should be present (missing is '.' in numeric variables and blank in character variables)
.R	REFUSED	Valid missing, refused survey response
.D	DON'T KNOW	Valid missing, don't know survey response
.N	INVALID SKIP	Invalid missing, not ascertained, an invalid skip, as response should be present but is not
.E	EDITING CODE	Editing code, extreme value, unreasonable or out of range survey response

2.3.2 Imputation

In order to compile the most accurate and complete LDS, there are several types of adjustments applied to the MCBS Cost Supplement data that compensate for missing information. Although a variety of methods are used in making the adjustments, adjustments of all types are governed by some basic principles. First, information reported by the survey respondent is retained, even if it is not complete, unless strong evidence suggests that it is not accurate. When information is not reported during the interview, Medicare claims data and administrative data are the first choice as a source of supplementary, or in some cases, surrogate information.

Event, payer, and payment information for medical events reported in 2015 were imputed when event data were missing. First data were imputed whether or not a payer (such as an insurance plan) paid for a particular event. If the payer paid then the amount paid was imputed next. Imputation was performed using the hot deck imputation method, and a flag was created for each imputed variable indicating whether or not the corresponding value was imputed.

NORC at the University of Chicago conducted the imputation for the 2015 Cost Supplement File. Imputation procedures in 2015 were revised and upgraded compared to those used in prior years. While every effort was made to produce reasonable and consistent imputed values, users may notice some differences in the data. Users may find additional information on how the imputation was conducted in the 2015 MCBS Methodology Report located on CMS' MCBS website at <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/MCBS/Codebooks.html>. Data users may find more information on the rationale behind the imputation process in Technical Appendix C of this document.

3. DATA FILE NOTES

This section is a collection of information about various data fields present in the Cost Supplement File. We start with information that is applicable globally; followed by specific information on some individual data fields, presented in the same sequence as the data fields appear in the codebook.

3.1 Global Information

Key Variables

There are several variables that appear on each segment in order to merge segments and/or identify each segment.

- **BASEID:** This key identifies the person interviewed. It is an 8-digit element, consisting of a unique, randomly assigned 7-digit number concatenated with a single-digit check digit. The BASEID is the key to merge data segments within an LDS or across LDS releases.
- **Version Number:** Often files are re-released due to needed updates, which will be noted by the version number variable.
- **Survey Year:** The Survey Year of interest is included as a variable on each segment.

Missing Values

Various special values are used to indicate the reason why some data are missing, such as .R for "refused," .D for "don't know". See Exhibit 2.3.1 above for additional values.

Open-Ended Questions

Respondents are asked a number of open-ended questions. For example, respondents are asked about different reasons why they may be dissatisfied with care and about types of problems experienced in getting health care. The respondents answer these questions in their own words, and interviewers record the responses verbatim. The interviewer is prohibited from paraphrasing or summarizing the respondents' answers. However, this release does not contain verbatim responses. Instead, responses are coded to similar responses to facilitate analysis. Often there will be more than one answer to a single question. In these cases, several variables are supplied, all of which contain categorized data. Given that the segments may contain some additional response categories, the variable values may not be fully consistent with the questionnaire items.

3.2 Cost Supplement File Segment Information

Below you will find information regarding each segment within the Cost Supplement File release. The segments are presented in alphabetical order. The notes have been organized into three main categories of information.

1. **Core Content** – a description of the main subject of the data.
2. **Variable Definitions** – definitions of derived variables and/or variables that require additional explanation regarding their construction.
3. **Special Notes** – additional background information that data users may find helpful for constructing analyses.

3.3 Event-Level Segments

The Event-level segments provide detailed information on all payers, costs, and utilization for the MCBS population.

Each Event-level segment contains the following variables. For both PM and non-PM events, the totals are adjusted for gap days. Event-level segments contain imputation flags to identify the presence of imputed amounts.

■ AMTTOT	Amount paid by all payers
■ AMTCARE	Amount paid by Medicare FFS
■ AMTCAID	Amount paid by Medicaid
■ AMTHMOP	Amount paid by private HMO
■ AMTMADV	Amount paid by Medicare MCO/HMO
■ AMTVA	Amount paid by VA
■ AMTPRVE	Amount paid by insurance - employer sponsored
■ AMTPRVI	Amount paid by insurance - self purchased
■ AMTPRVU	Unknown amount
■ AMTOOP	Amount paid out of pocket
■ AMTDISC	Discounted amount - beginning in 2013 includes sequestration reduction
■ AMTOTH	Amount paid by other

Dental Events (DUE)

Core Content

This file contains individual dental events for the MCBS population. The unit of observation is a single visit to the dentist, at which time a variety of services, including cleaning, x-rays, and an exam might be rendered.

Variable Definitions

Please see the Codebook for information regarding variables in this segment.

Special Notes

DVBRIDGE, DVCLEAN, DVCROWN, DVEXAM, DVEXTRAC, DVFILLNG, DVORTH0, DVOTHER, DVRTCNAL, DVXRAYS, DVPERIOD, DVSURG, and DVBONDNG: These variables are dental service indicator flags collected in the survey. Collection of these variables was on hold in 2012 and 2013, but are included in the DUE segment for 2015.

Facility Events (FAE)

Core Content

This segment includes individual facility events for the MCBS population. There is one record for each stay that occurred at least partly in the data year (i.e., the stay begins, ends, or endures through the calendar year). The unit of measurement of facility services is a "stay" in a nursing home or other long term care facility. Stays are measured in terms of days of residence in that facility. If a person is still in the facility at the end of 2015, the stay is not complete, but all data through the end of 2015 are included.

Variable Definitions

ADMISYY, ADMISMM, ADMISDD: The beneficiary's date of admission to the facility.

AMTCARE: The amount paid by Medicare FFS to the facility that is not included in any of the other Event records. For instance, most doctor visits that occurred while the person was in the facility will be found in the Medical Provider Events segment (MPE); however, if the facility reported an amount received by Medicare that exceeded the total Medicare amounts on the Event segments, then Medicare amount reported by the facility that is in excess of the other events' Medicare amounts is reported here.

AMTTOT: The sum of the six facility payer types (i.e., AMTCARE, AMTCAID, AMTVA, AMTPRVU, AMTOOP, AMTOTH). Note that according to the above explanation of AMTCARE, this amount is not duplicated in the other Event segments.

AMTOTH: Given the definition of TOTCARE, AMTOTH is the total amount paid for the person while in the facility by other payers (i.e., payments not attributed to Medicare, Medicaid, Tricare, and other government-funded payers). In the case of missing information where we need to impute amounts, AMTOTH could contain either the total payment amount or the additional amount by which payment amounts were increased.

BEGSTAT and ENDSTAT: Describe the beneficiary's situation at the beginning and end of the reference period.

DISCHYY, DISCHMM, DISCHDD: The beneficiary's date of discharge from the facility.

REFBEGYY, REFBEGMM, REFBEGDD: The earliest date in 2015 that the beneficiary was in the facility.

REFENDYY, REFENDMM, REFENDDD: The last date in 2015 that the beneficiary was in the facility.

TOTCARE: The total amount paid by Medicare while the person was in the facility, which includes all Medicare amounts from other Event segments that occurred during the person's facility stay. Additionally, it includes any amount reported by the facility that is in excess of the other events' Medicare amounts [AMTCARE].

TOTALL: The sum of TOTCARE, AMTCAID, AMTVA, AMTPRVU, AMTOOP.

STAYDAYS: The number of days in 2015 that the beneficiary was in the facility.

Special Notes

Stays are defined as any period of time that the beneficiary resided in a facility for one or more days and have complete facility interview data. New stays are generated for a beneficiary whenever they move to a new facility and complete an interview with the new facility. If the respondent left the facility for a period greater than 30 days and returned to the facility, a separate stay record was created.

Inpatient Hospital Events (IPE)

Core Content

This segment contains individual inpatient hospital events for the MCBS population. The unit of observation of inpatient hospital services is a single admission. If the beneficiary was still hospitalized at the end of the year, the inpatient event record is not complete, but all data through the end of 2015 are present.

Variable Definitions

Please see the Codebook for information regarding variables in this segment.

Special Notes

DRG, PROV, STATUS, UTLZNDAY, COINDAY, and LRDAY are variables from the matched Medicare claim.

Note that beginning in Cost and Use 2013, if the Diagnosis code > 1 then all additional diagnosis codes can be found on associated claims records included in the Survey File LDS.

The variable POAIND is the Present on Admission Indicator. E1DGNSCD is the 1st Diagnosis E code. The primary diagnosis code, PRINDIAG, is present on the file. For any other additional diagnosis codes associated with an event, please consult the CMS claims included in the Survey File LDS.

Institutional Events (IUE)

Core Content

This segment contains individual short-term facility (usually SNF) stays for the MCBS population that were reported during a community interview or created from Medicare claims data. The unit of observation is an admission. If the beneficiary was still in the institution at the end of the year, the institutional event is not complete, but all data for 2015 are present.

Variable Definitions

As in the IPE segment, PROV, STATUS, UTLZNDAY, and COINDAY are variables from the matched Medicare FFS claims.

Special Notes

In 2015 Cost Supplement File, if the Diagnosis code > 1 then all additional diagnosis codes can be found on associated claims records included in the Survey File LDS.

Medical Provider Events (MPE)

Core Content

This segment contains individual events for a variety of medical services, equipment, and supplies. The unit of observation is a separate visit, procedure, service, or a supplied item for a survey reported event. For Medicare claim-only events, it may represent 1) single or multiple visits; 2) single or multiple procedures; 3) single or multiple services; 4) single or multiple supplies; depending on the number of items pulled together on the bill.

Variable Definitions

MPE is a combination of medical provider events collected in the survey: medical provider [MP], separately billing doctor [SD], separately billing lab [SL], and other medical expenses [OM]. The EVNTTYPE variable distinguishes between these event types. The classifications of EVNTTYPEs are determined by how the respondent reported the event during the survey. For example, a respondent may report an MP event type and total costs associated with it. This may match a Medicare claim with

a line item cost for the physician visit and a line item cost for a lab service. In this case, there would not be a separate lab [SL] event.

PROVSPEC: Data reported in the survey and is only present for survey reported events.

OMETYPE, ORTHTYPE, ALTRTYPE, and OTHRTYPE: Data collected in the survey for OM (other medical expenses) event types.

Special Notes

When an event matched a Medicare claim, an effort was made to preserve some of the cost classifications that the claims line items explicate through the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) code. These groupings are found in the variables PAMTMED (physician costs), PAMTSURG (surgical costs), PAMTLABX (laboratory and x-ray costs), PAMTOM (other medical costs such as DME), and PAMTPM (prescribed medicine costs). These costs are total reimbursements and they sum to AMTTOT. Note that these variables will only have data for matched survey events and claim-only events.

Outpatient Hospital Events (OPE)

Core Content

This segment contains individual outpatient hospital events for the MCBS population. The unit of observation is a separate visit to any part of the outpatient department for a survey-reported event. For Medicare claim only events, it may represent 1) a single visit; 2) multiple procedures or services within one visit; 3) multiple visits billed together.

Variable Definitions

FROMDT and THRU DT: Dates from the matched Medicare claim indicating this event represents a period of outpatient hospital visits.

Special Notes

The variable POAIND is the Present on Admission Indicator. E1DGNSCD is the 1st Diagnosis E code. The primary diagnosis code, PRINDIAG, is present on the file. For any other additional diagnosis codes associated with an event, please consult the CMS claims included in the Survey File LDS.

Prescribed Medicine Events (PME)

Core Content

This segment contains individual outpatient prescribed medicine events for the MCBS population. The unit of observation is a single purchase/fill of a single drug in a single container.

Variable Definitions

Please see the Codebook for information regarding variables in this segment.

Special Notes

Some of the variables in this record are only applicable in certain situations during the interview. Variables that are only applicable when the form of the medication is a pill or a patch are:

- TABNUM Number of Tablets/patches in the container
- STRNNUM1 Strength Number
- STRNNUM2 Strength Number 2nd compound, only applicable to compound drugs
- STRNUNI1 Strength Unit
- STRNUNI2 Strength Unit 2nd compound, only applicable to compound drugs

The following variables are asked of the respondent when the medication's dosage form is not a pill, a patch, or a suppository.

- AMTUNIT Amount Unit
- AMTNUM Amount Number
- SUPPNUM Inapplicable unless the dosage form is a suppository

Often, characteristics are imputed about the drug to assist in assigning pricing data. IMPDF (the imputed dosage form) was only imputed when there was no match between what was reported and the possible dosage forms found in First Databank, or if the form was missing. We also changed the value of PMFORM when IMPDF was present. The imputed strength (IMPSTNG) and the amount number (IMAMTNUM) were imputed using various criteria and contributed to determining a unit price only. The presence of imputed amounts are identified via flags on this segment.

The following variables are unadjusted totals for the respondent. These totals do not account for any gap days (days not covered by interview).

- AMTTOT Amount paid by all payers
- AMTCARE Amount paid by Medicare FFS/Part D
- AMTCAID Amount paid by Medicaid
- AMTHMOP Amount paid by private HMO
- AMTMADV Amount paid by Medicare MCO/HMO
- AMTVA Amount paid by VA
- AMTPRVE Amount paid by insurance - employer sponsored
- AMTPRVI Amount paid by insurance - self purchased
- AMTPRVU Unknown amount
- AMTOOP Amount paid out of pocket
- AMTDISC Discounted amount
- AMTOTH Amount paid by other

3.4 Summary-Level Segments

The Service Summary-level segments summarize all payers, costs, and utilization for a beneficiary at the service level.

Person Summary (PS)

Core Content

This segment provides a summarization of utilization and expenditures by type of service and a summarization of expenditures by payer, yielding one record per person.

Variable Definitions

Please see the Codebook for information regarding variables in this segment.

Special Notes

The Type of Service record is summarized by person to construct the Person Summary record. There is one record per person with the SAMT variables summed across service types in SAMTTOT, SAMTCARE, SAMTCAID, SAMTDISC, SAMTMADV, SAMTHMOP, SAMTOOP, SAMTOTH, SAMTPRVE, SAMTPRVI, SAMTPRVU, SAMTVA, and SEVENTS. The AAMT variables are summed across service type in PAMTTOT, PAMTCAID, PAMTCARE, PAMTDISC, PAMTMADV, PAMTHMOP, PAMTOOP, PAMTOTH, PAMTPRVE, PAMTPRVI, PAMTPRVU, PAMTVA, and PEVENTS.

Service types are also summarized across payers for AAMT variables in PAMTDU, PAMTFA, PAMTHH, PAMTHP, PAMTIP, PAMTIU, PAMTMP, PAMTOP, and PAMTPM. Adjusted number of events by service type is summed in the variables DUAEVENTS, FAEVENTS, HHAEVENTS, HPAEVENTS, IPAEVENTS, IUAEVENTS, MPAEVENTS, OPAEVENTS, and PMAEVENTS.

CMS administrative data currently enters each visit separately so that there is a separate record for each HHA visit. This field captures the number of 15-minute segments of time spent on each visit. The correct way to calculate the number of individual visits is to sum the number of occurrences.

Service Summary (SS)

Core Content

This segment provides a summarization of the seven individual event files along with home health and hospice utilization, yielding a total of nine summary records per person.

Variable Definitions

Please see the Codebook for information regarding variables in this segment.

Special Notes

This record summarizes the Cost Supplement segments by person. For every person there are nine records: one record for each of the seven event types (Dental, Facility, Inpatient Hospital, Institutional, Medical Provider, Outpatient Hospital, and Prescribed Medicines), plus two additional records which are not present at the event level - Home Health Services and Hospice Services. The records are identifiable by the EVNTTYPE variable:

- DU - Dental
- FA - Facility
- HH - Home health
- HP - Hospice
- IP - Inpatient hospital

- IU - Institutional
- MP - Medical provider
- OP - Outpatient hospital
- PM - Prescribed medicine

When linking event-level data to service-level data, any survey-reported event that specified Medicare as a payer that was not matched to a Medicare claim was excluded from the Type of Service summary. Our analysis showed that either 1) the survey event's monies are bundled with a Medicare claim that already matched another survey event, or 2) the respondent was incorrect in reporting Medicare as a payer.

The total amount and the eleven payer types are summarized from the Event segments into the variables SAMTTOT, SAMTCARE, SAMTCAID, SAMTMADV, SAMTHMOP, SAMTVA, SAMTPRVE, SAMTPRVI, SAMTPRVU, SAMTOOP, SAMTDISC, and SAMTOTH. The total number of events is summed to SEVENTS. Additional events and expenditures for non-Medicare covered services were imputed for part-year respondents. The imputed monies were added to the above SAMT variables to create total dollars in the variables AAMTTOT, AAMTCARE, AAMTCAID, AAMTMADV, AAMTHMOP, AAMTVA, AAMTPRVE, AAMTPRVI, AAMTPRVU, AAMTOOP, AAMTDISC, and AAMTOTH. The total number of events reported and imputed is in AEVENTS. Note that for full-year respondents the SAMT variables will be the same as the AAMT variables.

CMS administrative data currently enters each visit separately so that there is a separate record for each HHA visit. This field captures the number of 15-minute segments of time spent on each visit. The correct way to calculate the number of individual visits is to sum the number of occurrences.

3.5 Residence Timeline (RESTMLN)

Core Content

The RESTMLN segment provides a timeline of each setting in which a beneficiary resided over the course of the year. The total number of setting changes is recorded in the NUMSIT variable, while each transition is identified with a begin data and a code representing the type of setting.

Variable Definitions

Please see the Codebook for information regarding variables in this segment. There are some variables on this segment that were derived or created by combining two or more survey variables. These derived variables are preceded with the characters "D_". CMS may create or modify variables in order to recode data items (e.g., to protect the confidentiality of survey participants) or to globally edit some variables.

Special Notes

Previous versions of the MCBS residence timeline detailed when a beneficiary resided in a community or facility setting, or was receiving care in a SNF. The timeline will now also include periods in which a beneficiary had an inpatient hospital stay or was receiving hospice care.

The 2015 segment is included with the Cost Supplement LDS for data year 2015 only, as it was constructed using the Cost Supplement population. For the 2016 data year and beyond, the segment will be included with the Survey File LDS.

3.6 Weights

CSEVWGTS Core Content

The CSEVWGTS segment includes full-sample and replicate weights representing the 2015 ever enrolled population. These weights may be used to conduct joint analyses of MCBS 2015 Survey File data and MCBS 2015 Cost Supplement data. Longitudinal weights for the 2015 Cost Supplement data were not derived this year because 2014 MCBS data was not released, but will be released in future data years.

Variable Definitions

CSEVWGTS contains BASEID, which can be used to merge the weights to other data files, in addition to variables identifying panel selection year (PANEL), variance stratum and unit defined for variance estimation using Taylor series linearization (SUDSTRAT, SUDUNIT), and the final full-sample weights and replicate weights.

Special Notes

CSEVWGTS includes records for beneficiaries that were sampled in the 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 panels. The 2015 cross-sectional weights are populated for all records, including members of all four panels. The 2012, 2013, and 2014 panels are referred to as "Continuing Panels" and provided survey-reported cost and utilization for 2015 through participation in the MCBS during Fall 2014 through Winter 2016 rounds. Members of the 2015 panel who were first enrolled in 2014 (excluding 1/1/2014) or 2015 are referred to as "Incoming Panel Respondents." They were first interviewed in Fall 2015 and did not provide cost and utilization data for the period of time covering enrollment and completion of the Fall 2015 interview; cost and utilization data for the period between the Fall 2015 interview and the end of 2015 were collected in Winter 2016. A combination of the survey-collected data for the end of the year and Medicare claims data was used to impute beneficiary-level data for the entire period of enrollment in 2015. The resulting final cross-sectional weights (CSEVRWGT /CSEVR001-CSEVR100), which include both the Continuing and Incoming Panel Respondents, represent the population of beneficiaries that were ever enrolled in Medicare for at least one day at any time during 2015.

Users do not need to apply formats to the datasets as the weights are real numbers and do not need to be grouped or labeled.

The Survey File longitudinal weights cannot be used for analysis of Cost Supplement data because the beneficiaries eligible for inclusion in the file are different. The Cost Supplement File is representative of the ever enrolled population of beneficiaries (i.e., ever enrolled in Medicare for at least one day at any time during the data year), but contains a smaller subset of beneficiaries with complete cost and utilization data for the year.

A detailed discussion of the weights construction process is provided in the 2015 MCBS Methodology Report available on the CMS MCBS website.

4. REFERENCES

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APPENDICES

5. APPENDICES

Appendix A: MCBS Common Definitions

Activities of daily living (ADLs): Activities of daily living are activities related to personal care. They include bathing or showering, dressing, getting in and out of bed or a chair, walking, using the toilet, and eating.

Baseline interview: The initial questionnaire administered to new respondents to the study; administered in the fall of the year they are selected into the sample (interview #1).

Beneficiary: An individual selected from MCBS' sample about whom the MCBS collects information. Beneficiary may also refer to a person receiving Medicare services who may or not be participating in the MCBS.

Claim-only event: A claim-only event is a medical service or event known only through the presence of a Medicare claim. The event did not originate from an event or service reported by a respondent during an interview.

Community component: Survey of beneficiaries residing in the community at the time of the interview (i.e., not in a long-term care facility such as a nursing home). Beneficiaries answered health status and functioning questions themselves, unless they were unable to do so.

Continuing interview: The questionnaire administered to repeat respondents as they progress through the study (interviews #2-12).

Continuously enrolled (aka always enrolled): A Medicare beneficiary who was enrolled in Medicare from the first day of the calendar year until the fall interview and did not die prior to the fall round. This population excludes beneficiaries who enrolled during the calendar year 2015, those who dis-enrolled or died prior to their fall interview, residents of foreign countries, and residents of U.S. possessions and territories other than Puerto Rico.

Core modules: These sections of the MCBS Questionnaire are of critical purpose and policy relevancy to the MCBS, regardless of season of administration.

Crossover: A respondents who enters a long-term care facility setting (e.g., nursing homes) or who alternates between a community and a facility setting.

Ever enrolled: A Medicare beneficiary who was enrolled at any time during the calendar year including those who dis-enrolled or died prior to their fall interview. Excluded from this population are residents of foreign countries and of U.S. possessions and territories other than Puerto Rico.

Exit interview: Conducted in the summer round, this interview completes the respondent's participation in the MCBS (interview #12). The exit interview is a special case of the Continuing interview.

Facility component: Survey of beneficiaries residing in facilities, such as long-term care nursing homes or other institutions, at the time of the interview. Facility interviewers do not conduct the Facility component with the respondent, but with a staff member located at the facility. This is a key difference between the Community and Facility components.

Fee-for-Service (FFS) payment: Fee-for-Service is a method of paying for medical services in which each service delivered by a provider bears a charge. This charge is paid by the patient receiving the service or by an insurer on behalf of the patient.

Field interviewer: The principal contact for collecting and securing respondent data.

Field manager: A supervisor who motivates and manages a group of field interviewers to meet the goals of high quality data collection on time and within budget limits.

Incoming Panel Sample (formerly known as Supplemental Panel): A scientifically selected group of sampled beneficiaries that enter the MCBS in the fall of a data collection year. One panel is retired during each summer round, and a new panel is selected to replace it each fall round. Panels are identified by the data collection year (e.g., 2015 panel) in which they were selected.

Instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs): Instrumental activities of daily living are activities related to independent living. They include preparing meals, managing money, shopping for groceries or personal items, performing light or heavy housework, and using a telephone. If a beneficiary had any difficulty performing an activity by himself/herself, or did not perform the activity at all, because of health problems, the person was deemed to have a limitation in that activity. The limitation may have been temporary or chronic at the time of the survey. Facility interviewers did not ask about the beneficiary's ability to prepare meals or perform light or heavy housework, since they are not applicable to the beneficiary's situation; however, interviewers did question proxies about the beneficiary's ability to manage money, shop for groceries or personal items, or use a telephone.

Internal Sample Control File: A data file that contains every beneficiary sampled back through the beginning of MCBS. The file contains sampling information, year of selection, primary sampling unit, secondary sampling unit, contact information, and other sampling demographic information as well as final disposition codes to indicate completion status per round, component fielded per round, dates of death, and lost entitlement information.

Long-term care facility: A facility that provides rehabilitative, restorative, and/or ongoing skilled nursing care to patients or residents in need of assistance with activities of daily living.

Medicare: Medicare is the federal health insurance program for people who are 65 or older, certain younger people with disabilities, and people with End-Stage Renal Disease (permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a transplant, sometimes called ESRD). The different parts of Medicare help cover specific services:

- Hospital Insurance (Part A): covers inpatient hospital stays, care in a skilled nursing facility, hospice care, and some home health care.
- Medical Insurance (Part B): covers certain doctors' services, outpatient care, medical supplies, and preventive services.
- Medicare Advantage (Part C): an alternative to coverage under traditional Medicare (Parts A and B), a health plan option similar to a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) or Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) administered by private companies.
- Prescription Drug Coverage (Part D): additional, optional coverage for prescription drugs administered by private companies.

For more information, please visit the Medicare.gov website at <https://www.medicare.gov/sign-up-change-plans/decide-how-to-get-medicare/whats-medicare/what-is-medicare.html>

Medicare Advantage (MA): Medicare Advantage Plans, sometimes called “Part C” or “MA Plans,” are offered by private companies approved by Medicare. An MA provides, or arranges for the provision of, a comprehensive package of health care services to enrolled persons for a fixed capitation payment. The term “Medicare Advantage” includes all types of MAs that contract with Medicare, encompassing risk MAs, cost MAs, and health care prepayment plans (HCPPs).

Medicare beneficiary (aka, beneficiary): An individual who meets at least one of three criteria (is aged 65 years or older, is under age 65 with certain disabilities, or is of any age with End-Stage Renal Disease) and is entitled to health insurance benefits. (Source: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/MedicareGenInfo/index.html>).

Minimum Data Set (MDS): The Minimum Data Set (MDS) is part of the federally mandated process for clinical assessment of all residents in Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing homes. For more information, please visit <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Computer-Data-and-Systems/Minimum-Data-Set-3-0-Public-Reports/index.html>.

Panel: see Incoming Panel Sample

Personal health care expenditures: Personal health care expenditures consist of health care goods and services purchased directly by individuals. They exclude public program administration costs, the net cost of private health insurance, research by nonprofit groups and government entities, and the value of new construction put in place for hospitals and nursing homes.

Prescription medicines: The basic unit measuring use of prescription medicines is a single purchase of a single drug in a single container. Prescription drug use is collected only for beneficiaries living in the community or in a facility, and does not include prescription medicines administered during an inpatient hospital stay.

Primary Sampling Unit (PSU): Primary sampling unit refers to sampling units that are selected in the first (primary) stage of a multi-stage sample ultimately aimed at selecting individual elements (Medicare beneficiaries in the case of MCBS). PSUs are made up of major geographic areas consisting of metropolitan areas or groups of rural counties.

Race/ethnicity: Responses to race and ethnicity questions were recorded as interpreted by the respondent. Respondents who reported they were white and not of Hispanic origin were coded as white non-Hispanic; those who reported they were black/African-American and not of Hispanic origin were coded as black non-Hispanic; persons who reported they were Hispanic, regardless of their race, were coded as Hispanic; persons who reported they were American Indian, an Asian or Pacific Islander, or other race and not of Hispanic origin were coded as other race/ethnicity. Hispanic includes persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. Respondents with more than one racial background were captured in a separate category and collapsed into the “other” category.

Reference Period: The timeframe to which a questionnaire item refers.

Residence status: Full-year community residents are Medicare beneficiaries who lived solely in household units during the data collection year and who received community interviews only. Full-year facility residents are Medicare beneficiaries who lived solely in a long-term care facility during the data collection year and who received Facility interviews only. Part-year community/part-year facility residents are Medicare beneficiaries who lived part of the year in the community and part of the year in a long-term care facility, and who received both Community and Facility interviews. Skilled nursing

facility users are Medicare beneficiaries who lived in either the community or a facility, and who used skilled nursing facility services during the data collection year.

Respondent: The person who answers questions about the beneficiary for the MCBS; this person can be the beneficiary themselves, a proxy, or a staff member located at a facility where the beneficiary resides.

Round: The MCBS data collection period. There are three distinct rounds each year; winter (January through April); summer (May through August); and fall (September through December).

Sample person: An individual beneficiary selected from MCBS' Incoming Panel sample to participate in the MCBS survey.

Survey-reported event: A survey-reported event is a medical service or event reported by a respondent during an interview. The event may have been matched to a Medicare claim, or it may be a survey-only event, in which case it was not matched to a Medicare claim and is only known through the survey.

Secondary Sampling Unit (SSU): SSUs are made up of census tracts or groups of tracts within the selected PSUs.

Topical sections: Sections of the MCBS Questionnaire that collect information on special interest topics. They may be fielded every round or on a seasonal basis. Specific topics may include housing characteristics, drug coverage, and knowledge about Medicare.

Ultimate Sampling Unit (USU): USUs are Medicare beneficiaries selected from within the selected SSUs.

Appendix B: MCBS Rounds by Data Year and Season

	Winter	Summer	Fall
1991	n/a	n/a	1
1992	2	3	4
1993	5	6	7
1994	8	9	10
1995	11	12	13
1996	14	15	16
1997	17	18	19
1998	20	21	22
1999	23	24	25
2000	26	27	28
2001	29	30	31
2002	32	33	34
2003	35	36	37
2004	38	39	40
2005	41	42	43
2006	44	45	46
2007	47	48	49
2008	50	51	52
2009	53	54	55
2010	56	57	58
2011	59	60	61
2012	62	63	64
2013	65	66	67
2014	68	69	70
2015	71/72	71/72	73
2016	74	75	76

Appendix C: Technical Appendices

C.1 Using the Data

Example 1: Ever Enrolled Population

Below is the SAS code needed to create an analytic file that includes the Survey File and Cost Supplement variables. This example uses the Cost Supplement ever enrolled general purpose weights required to analyze out-of-pocket spending for Medicare beneficiaries by age. Because the analysis involves annual out-of-pocket costs, the adjusted total out-of-pocket spending variable (PAMTOOP) in the Person Summary (PS) segment is used. PAMTOOP summarizes spending for nine types of events (dental services, home health, hospice, inpatient, institutional, medical provider, outpatient, and prescribed medication, and facility) for each beneficiary, including by source of payment.

To produce estimates that are representative of the ever enrolled population, data users need to merge the Person Summary segment from the Cost Supplement File with the Demographics (DEMO) segment from the Survey File, and limit the observations to respondents listed in the weights segment (CSEVWGTS). Inclusion of "(in=a)" and "if a then output" in the SAS code statement ensures that all observations in the weights segment are preserved, regardless of whether or not the other segments include the entire sample, and that the resulting dataset is restricted to the observations included in the weights file.

```
data merged_costfile;

    merge      cost15.CSEVWGTS (in = a)
              survey15.DEMO (keep = BASEID H_AGE)
              cost15.PS (keep = BASEID PAMTOOP);

    by BASEID;
    if a then output;

run;
```

This merged file now includes the relevant Survey File and Cost Supplement variables that will allow for an examination of out-of-pocket spending for Medicare beneficiaries by age.

There are numerous ways to convert these raw variables into analytic variables. Below is one approach, which transforms the age variable (H_AGE) in the analytic file into a categorical variable.

```
data mcbs_analyticfile;
    set merged_costfile;

    /*AGE*/
    if H_AGE LT 65 then AGECAT = 0; /* 4-category age group: <65; 65-74, 75-84, 85+ */
    else if H_AGE GE 65 and H_AGE LT 75 then AGECAT=1;
    else if H_AGE GE 75 and H_AGE LT 85 then AGECAT=2;
    else if H_AGE GE 85 then AGECAT=3;

run;
```

The sample code below demonstrates how to use the constructed analytic dataset to estimate out-of-pocket spending for all Medicare beneficiaries stratified by age. Although the MCBS includes variables to obtain weighted estimates and estimated standard errors using Taylor-series linearization approach, the balanced repeated replication (BRR or Fay's method) method provides more analytic flexibility

when analyzing subgroups. Therefore, the examples presented in this section use BRR (Fay's method) variance estimation method.

* Estimate Total Out-of-Pocket Spending for Medicare Beneficiaries in 2015 (using balanced repeated replication (Fay's method));

```
proc surveymeans data= mcbs_analyticfile varmethod = brr (fay=.30);
    var PAMTOOP;
        weight CSEVRWGT;
        repweights CSEVR001-CSEVR100;
        domain AGECAT;
run;
```

Example 2: Event Level Data

Additionally, a researcher might be interested in using event level data, such as estimating spending on cardiovascular drugs costs for Medicare beneficiaries in the given year. In this case, data users need separate records for each prescription drug event a beneficiary had in a given year, which allows for identifying beneficiaries who were prescribed cardiovascular drugs and total spending during the year. This example uses an Event Summary (ES) segment (i.e., the Prescribed Medicine Event segment (PME)), which allows for analysis of each point of service for a given beneficiary.

To identify Medicare beneficiaries who were prescribed cardiovascular drugs during the year, data users need to limit the Prescribed Medicine Events (PME) file to prescription drug events related to drugs with a cardiovascular therapeutic classification. Next, data users need to calculate total spending on cardiovascular drugs during the year for each Medicare beneficiary.

```
proc sql;
    create table drug_spending_bybene as
        select unique BASEID, sum(AMTTOT) as DRUG_SPENDING
            from cost15.PME
            where THERCC = "41"
            group by baseid;
quit;
```

To produce estimates that are representative of the ever enrolled population, data users need to merge the weights segment (CSEVWGTS) and limit the dataset to the population included in the 'drug_spending_bybene' file. Inclusion of "(in=a)" and "if a then output" in the SAS code statement ensures that observations that are in both the weights segment and the analytic file are preserved.

```
data mcbs_analyticfile;
    merge          cost15.CSEVWGTS
                  drug_spending_bybene (in = a);
    by BASEID;
    if a then output;
run;
```

The sample code below demonstrates how to use the constructed analytic dataset to estimate average spending on cardiovascular drugs during the year for Medicare beneficiaries at least one prescription for a cardiovascular drug during the year. Balanced repeated replication (BRR or Fay's method) method variance estimation method is used in this example.

* Estimate Total Spending on Cardiovascular drugs per user for Medicare Beneficiaries in 2015 (using balanced repeated replication (Fay's method));

```
proc surveymeans data= mcbs_analyticfile varmethod = brr (fay=.30);
    var DRUG_SPENDING;
    weight CSEVRWGT;
    repweights CSEVR001-CSEVR100;
run;
```

Example 3: Service Summary Data

Finally, a data user might want to learn about what services beneficiaries use in a given year. In this example, data users will examine the extent to which the use of outpatient hospital services varies by age. This analysis utilizes the Service Summary (SS) segment, which allows researchers to identify the total number of outpatient hospital events each beneficiary had in a given year. Data users need to subset the SS segment by event type. The sample code below demonstrate this by creating an analytic file that only includes service summary records of outpatient events.

To produce estimates that are representative of the ever enrolled population, data users need to merge the 'op_summary' analytic file with the Demographics (DEMO) segment, and limit the observations to respondents listed in the weights segment (CSEVWGTS). Inclusion of "(in=a)" and "if a then output" in the SAS code statement ensures that all observations in the weights segment are preserved, regardless of whether or not the other segments include the entire sample, and that your dataset is restricted to the observations included in the weights file.

```
data op_summary;
    set cost15.SS (keep = BASEID AEVENTS EVNTTYPE);
    if EVNTTYPE = "OP" then output;
run;

data merged_costfile;
    merge          cost15.CSEVWGTS(in = a)
                  survey15.DEMO (keep = BASEID H_AGE)
                  op_summary;
    by BASEID;
    if a then output;
run;
```

The merged file now includes the relevant Survey File and Cost Supplement variables that will allow for an examination of the number of out-patient episodes for Medicare beneficiaries by age.

The sample code below transforms the age variable (H_AGE) in the analytic file into a categorical variable.

```
data mcbs_analyticfile;
    set merged_costfile;

    /*AGE*/
    if H_AGE LT 65 then AGECAT = 0; /* 4-category age group: <65; 65-74, 75-84, 85+ */
    else if H_AGE GE 65 and H_AGE LT 75 then AGECAT=1;
    else if H_AGE GE 75 and H_AGE LT 85 then AGECAT=2;
```

```
else if H_AGE GE 85 then AGECAT=3;
```

```
run;
```

The sample code below demonstrates how to use the constructed analytic dataset to estimate the average number of outpatient episodes for Medicare beneficiaries in 2015 by age. Balanced repeated replication (BRR or Fay's method) method variance estimation method is used in this example.

* Estimate Number of Outpatient Episodes for Medicare Beneficiaries in 2015 by Age (using balanced repeated replication (Fay's method));

```
proc surveymeans data= mcbs_analyticfile varmethod = brr (fay=.30);
  var AEVENTS;
  weight CSEVRWGT;
  repweights CSEVR001-CSEVR100;
  domain AGECAT;
run;
```

Example 4: Across Data Releases

The next set of examples uses a hypothetical analysis plan to examine out-of-pocket costs for Medicare beneficiaries whose usual source of care is a hospital or emergency room. This analysis requires merging the Survey File to the Cost Supplement File. As in Example 1 above, the analysis involves annual out-of-pocket costs. Thus, the adjusted total out-of-pocket spending variable (PAMTOOP) in the Person Summary (PS) segment is used, which summarizes spending for nine types of events (dental services, home health, hospice, inpatient, institutional, medical provider, outpatient, and prescribed medication, and facility) for each beneficiary, including by source of payment. Note that we include the Cost Supplement weights in this example, which will approximate costs for the ever enrolled population.

```
data merged_surveycostfile;
  merge cost15.CSEVWGTS (in = a)
        survey15.DEMO (keep = BASEID INT_TYPE H_AGE)
        survey15.CHRNCOND (keep = BASEID OCDTYPE)
        survey15.USCPPIC (keep = BASEID PLACEPAR PLACEKND)
        cost15.PS (keep = BASEID PAMTOOP);
  by BASEID;
  if a then output;
run;
```

This merged file now includes the relevant Survey File and Cost Supplement variables that will allow for an examination of out-of-pocket costs for community-dwelling Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes.

There are numerous ways to convert these raw variables into analytic variables. The approach below creates variables for age (AGE), residence status (COMMONLY), the presence of Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes (DIABETES), and an indicator for the beneficiary's usual source of care (US_SOC):

```
data mcbs_analyticfile;
  set merged_surveycostfile;
  keep baseid age commonly diabetes us_soc pamtoop cs: sud;;
```

```

/*AGE*/
if H_AGE LT 65 then age = 0; /* 4-category age group: <65; 65-74, 75-84, 85+ */
else if H_AGE GE 65 and H_AGE LT 75 then age=1;
else if H_AGE GE 75 and H_AGE LT 85 then age=2;
else if H_AGE GE 85 then age=3;
/*RESIDENCE STATUS*/
if INT_TYPE='C' then commonly=1;
else commonly=0;
/*DIABETES*/
if OCdtype in (1,2) then diabetes=1; /* indicator variable for Type 1 or Type 2
diabetes */
else diabetes=0;
/*USUAL SOURCE OF CARE*/
US_SOC = 999; /* MISSING */
if PLACEPAR = 2 then US_SOC = 0; /* NONE*/
else if PLACEPAR = 1 then do ;
if PLACEKND in (1, 2) then US_SOC = 1; /* DOCTOR'S OFFICE OR CLINIC*/
else if PLACEKND IN (11,12) then US_SOC = 2; /* HOSPITAL/OPD/ER */
else if PLACEKND IN (3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,13,14,91) then US_SOC = 3; /* OTHER */
end;
run;

```

Example 5: Variance Estimation

The sample code below provides examples of how to produce correct estimates for continuous and categorical variables and for the entire sample as well as for a subgroup. The examples use the file created in Example 4 above (i.e., `mcbs_analyticfile`) to estimate out-of-pocket spending for all Medicare beneficiaries (Example 5.1), out-of-pocket spending for community-dwelling Medicare beneficiaries whose usual source of care is a hospital or emergency room (Example 5.2), usual source of care for all Medicare beneficiaries (Example 5.3), and usual source of care for community-dwelling Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes (Example 5.4).

Although the MCBS includes variables to obtain weighted estimates and estimated standard errors using Taylor-series linearization approach, the balanced repeated replication (BRR or Fay's method) method provides more analytic flexibility when analyzing subgroups.¹ Therefore, the examples presented in this section pertaining to subgroup analysis (Examples 5.2 and 5.4) use BRR (Fay's method) variance estimation method.

The examples below provide sample code for SAS®, Stata®, and R® to generate estimates, both for the total population and for subgroups.

Example 5.1. Total Out-of-Pocket Spending for Medicare Beneficiaries

¹ For example, performing analysis on small subgroups could lead to instances where one or more strata contain a single observation. In such situations, calculating intra-strata variances using Taylor-series Linearization approach is not possible. Therefore, standard errors cannot be computed.

SAS

* Estimate Total Out-of-Pocket Spending for Medicare Beneficiaries in 2015 (using balanced repeated replication (Fay's method));

```
proc surveymeans data= mcbs_analyticfile varmethod = brr (fay=.30);
    var PAMTOOP;
    weight CSEVRWGT;
    repweights CSEVR001-CSEVR100;
run;
```

* Estimate Total Out-of-Pocket Spending for Medicare Beneficiaries in 2015 (using Taylor-series Linearization approach);

```
proc surveymeans data= mcbs_analyticfile varmethod = TAYLOR;
    var PAMTOOP;
    weight CSEVRWGT;
    cluster SUDUNIT;
    strata SUDSTRAT;
run;
```

Stata²

* declare survey dataset (using balanced repeated replication (fay's method));
svyset [pweight= csevrwgt], brrweight(csevr001-csevr100) fay(.3) vce(brr)

* estimate total out-of-pocket spending for medicare beneficiaries in 2015;
svy brr, fay(.3) : mean pamtoop

* declare survey dataset (using taylor-series linearization approach);
svyset [pweight= csevrwgt], strata(sudstrat) psu(sudunit)

* estimate total out-of-pocket spending for medicare beneficiaries in 2015;
svy: mean pamtoop

R

```
# specify survey design object (using balanced repeated replication (fay's method))
mcbs <- svrepdesign(
    weights = ~csevrwgt,
    repweights = "csevr[001-100]+",
    type = "Fay",
    rho = 0.3,
    data = mcbs_analyticfile,
    combined.weights = TRUE
)
```

² Note that the mcbs_analyticfile for Stata and R code must include the appropriate weights and the stratum variables.

```
# specify survey design object (using taylor-series linearization approach)
mcbs <- svydesign(
  weights = ~csevrwgt,
  id = ~sudunit,
  strata = ~sudstrat,
  nest= TRUE,
  data = mcbs_analyticfile
)

# estimate total out-of-pocket spending for medicare beneficiaries in 2015;
svymean(~pamtoop, design=mcbs)
```

Example 5.2. Total Out-of-Pocket Spending for Community-Dwelling Medicare Beneficiaries Whose Usual Source of Care is Hospital or Emergency Room

SAS

* Total Out-of-Pocket Spending for Community-Dwelling Medicare Beneficiaries Whose Usual Source of Care is Hospital or Emergency Room in 2015 (using balanced repeated replication (Fay's method));

```
proc surveymeans data= mcbs_analyticfile varmethod = brr (fay=.30);
  var PAMTOOP;
  weight CSEVRWGT;
  repweights CSEVR001-CSEVR100;
  domain COMMONLY * US_SOC;
run;
```

Stata

```
* declare survey dataset (using balanced repeated replication (fay's method))
svyset [pweight= csevrwgt], brrweight(csevr001-csevr100) fay(.3) vce(brr)

* total out-of-pocket spending for community-dwelling medicare beneficiaries whose usual
source of care is
* hospital or emergency room in 2015
svy brr, fay(.3) subpop(if commonly==1 & us_soc==2) : mean pamtoop
```

R

```
# specify survey design object (using balanced repeated replication (fay's method))
mcbs_ussoc <- svrepdesign(
  weights = ~csevrwgt,
  repweights = "csevr[001-100]+",
  type = "Fay",
```



```

        rho = 0.3,
        data = mcbs_analyticfile,
        combined.weights = TRUE
    )
mcbs_ussoc <- subset(mcbs, commonly==1 & us_soc==2)
# total out-of-pocket spending for community-dwelling medicare beneficiaries whose usual
source of care is hospital or emergency room in 2015
svymean(~pamtoop, design=mcbs_ussoc)

```

Example 5.3. Number of Medicare Beneficiaries by Usual Source of Care

SAS

* Number of Medicare Beneficiaries by Usual Source of Care in 2015 (using balanced repeated replication (Fay's method));

```

proc surveyfreq data= mcbs_analyticfile varmethod = brr (fay=.30);
    table US_SOC;
    weight CSEVRWGT;
    repweights CSEVR001 - CSEVR100;
run;

```

* Number of Medicare Beneficiaries by Usual Source of Care in 2015 (using Taylor-series Linearization approach);

```

proc surveyfreq data= mcbs_analyticfile varmethod = TAYLOR;
    table US_SOC;
    weight CSEVRWGT;
    cluster SUDUNIT;
    strata SUDSTRAT;
run;

```

Stata

* declare survey dataset (using balanced repeated replication (fay's method))
svyset [pweight= csevrwgt], brrweight(csevr001-csevr100) fay(.3) vce(brr)

* number of medicare beneficiaries by usual source of care in 2015
svy brr, fay(.3) : tabulate us_soc, se

* declare survey dataset (using taylor-series linearization approach)
svyset [pweight= csevrwgt], strata(sudstrat) psu(sudunit)

* number of medicare beneficiaries by usual source of care in 2015
svy : tabulate us_soc, se

R

```

# specify survey design object
mcbs <- svrepdesign(

```

```

        weights = ~csevrwgt,
        repweights = "csevr[001-100]+",
        type = "Fay",
        rho = 0.3,
        data = mcbs_analyticfile,
        combined.weights = TRUE
    )

# specify survey design object (using taylor-series linearization approach)
mcbs <- svydesign(
    weights = ~csevrwgt,
    id = ~sudunit,
    strata = ~sudstrat,
    nest = TRUE,
    data = mcbs_analyticfile
)

# number of medicare beneficiaries by usual source of care in 2015
svytable(~us_soc, design=mcbs)

```

Example 5.4. Number of Community-Dwelling Medicare Beneficiaries with Diabetes by Usual Source of Care

SAS

* Number of Community-Dwelling Medicare Beneficiaries with Diabetes by Usual Source of Care in 2015 (using balanced repeated replication (Fay's method));

```

proc surveyfreq data= mcbs_analyticfile varmethod = brr (fay=.30);
    table DIABETES * COMMONLY * US_SOC/ row;
    weight CSEVRWGT;
    repweights CSEVR001-CSEVR100;
run;

```

Stata

* declare survey dataset (using balanced repeated replication (fay's method))
svyset _n [pweight= csevrwgt], brrweight(csevr001-csevr100) fay(.3) vce(brr)

* number of community-dwelling medicare beneficiaries with
* diabetes by usual source in 2015

```
svy brr, fay(.3) subpop(if diabetes==1 & commonly==1) : tab us_soc
```

R

```

# specify survey design object (using balanced repeated replication (fay's method))
mcbs <- svrepdesign(

```

```

        weights = ~csevrwgt,
        repweights = "csevr[001-100]+",
        type = "Fay",
        rho = 0.3,
        data = mcbs_analyticfile,
        combined.weights = TRUE
    )
mcbs_subgrp <- subset(mcbs, diabetes==1 & commonly==1)

# number of community-dwelling medicare beneficiaries with
# diabetes by usual source of care in 2015
svytable(~us_soc, design=mcbs_subgrp)

```

C.2 Matching Survey and Administrative Data

The Cost Supplement File brings together survey information, which can only be obtained directly from a beneficiary or proxy respondent with reliable information on services used, and Medicare payments made from administrative bill files. Survey reported cost data includes information on use and costs of health care services as well as information on supplementary health insurance. The survey also collects information on health services not covered by Medicare, most notably, long term facility care and dental services.

Medicare bill data includes use and cost information on prescription drugs, inpatient hospitalizations, outpatient hospital care, physician services, home health services, durable medical equipment, skilled nursing home services, and hospice services. This combination cost supplement file can support a much broader range of research and policy analyses on the Medicare population than would be possible using either survey collected cost data or administrative bill data alone.

Use and costs of Medicare covered services are reported on both the MCBS survey and in the Medicare central office billing system. This overlap in reporting from the two sources was used to verify the accuracy of survey reports of health service use. Survey reports were matched with administrative bill data to adjust for survey under-reporting using more complete administrative bill data, and to fill in and correct survey reported payment amounts with more accurate information from bills submitted to and paid by Medicare. Note that this could only be done for Fee-for-Service (or Original Medicare) beneficiaries accessing services covered by Medicare such as prescription drugs, inpatient hospital services, outpatient hospital services, physician services, home health services, acute skilled nursing facility services, durable medical equipment, and other covered services. For health services not covered by Medicare such as long term facility care, there was no independent source to which survey reports could be matched.

Under-reporting of medical services is an enduring problem in personal interview surveys. While respondents can usually recall significant events like hospitalizations for several months, they often fail to recall more routine care like physician visits after a few weeks. In general, as the time interval between the interview date and the medical event increases, the probability decreases that the event will be recalled and reported accurately in the interview. The MCBS interviews sampled beneficiaries three times per year, and the average interview recall period is about four months. (More frequent interviews would reduce the recall problem, but it would greatly increase both survey administration costs and the reporting burden on beneficiaries). Given normal rates of memory decay and the frequency with which aged and disabled persons use medical care, it was reasonable to assume that

matching survey events to administrative bills would be helpful in identifying medical events that the respondent could not recall during the interviews.

C.2.1 File Building

In order to get a complete and accurate file of services used and payments made, all 84,999 matched service records should be added to all unmatched 107,957 Medicare claim only records. In addition, unmatched survey reports, excluding the 15,564 records with a Medicare payment amount and no Medicare Advantage payment amount, should be added to the matched and Medicare claim only records. The records which are to be excluded are identified with the SOWMP flag. This file will be the most complete and accurate file possible, and this combination minimizes the risk of double counting unmatched records.

C.2.2 Filling the Gaps

The 2015 Cost Supplement File is designed to provide person level data for estimating total use of, and total payments for, all health care services, covered and non-covered, received by Medicare beneficiaries during calendar year 2015.

This section describes the adjustments that were made to the MCBS data to attain the goal of estimating total use of, and total payments for all health care services (covered and non-covered), received by Medicare beneficiaries during CY 2015. The adjustments made are as follows:

- **EVENT-LEVEL MATCHING:** These operations identified services paid for by Medicare that were not reported on the survey and corrected Medicare payment data reported inaccurately on the survey. A discussion of match results and instructions for building a complete file and avoiding duplication is provided in Technical Appendices C.2.3.3-C.2.3.4.
- **MISSING PAYMENTS AND PAYERS:** These adjustments compensate for missing payment data and for when the respondent did not know how much an event cost and/or how the event was paid for (by whom, and how much by each payer).
- **PRESCRIPTION DRUGS:** Describes the particular problems encountered in creating the prescription drug event file and how missing payment data was handled.
- **ADJUSTMENTS FOR MISSING DAYS AND UNDATED USE:** These adjustments compensate for data that are missing because some periods of time were not covered by interviews and because some types of health services use (particularly prescription drugs) are undated.

Adjustments made to records in the Cost Supplement LDS are constrained in two ways. First, because CMS administrative data are used to fill in much of the missing information, all adjustments to MCBS utilization, cost, and source of payment data are consistent with CMS administrative data. For example, if CMS records indicate that the beneficiary is dually entitled to both Medicare and Medicaid, then Medicaid must be considered a possible source of payment when source of payment is missing, even if the beneficiary did not volunteer that information. Second, adjusted data must be consistent with other information for the same person. For example, the source of payment for individual events must be consistent with the beneficiary's health insurance information.

C.2.3 Event-Level Matching

There are two primary objectives in matching survey reports to Medicare administrative bill records: to correct for under reporting of events on the survey, and to correct errors in payment information collected in the survey.

The first step in matching survey reported medical events to Medicare bill records is gathering all events for a person together. Because the MCBS sample is drawn from CMS' Medicare Administrative enrollment data, matching the Medicare paid claims and bills with the correct beneficiary is a reasonably straightforward process. The beneficiary's Medicare number, or health insurance claim number (HICN), is part of the information collected from the enrollment data when the sample is drawn. The beneficiary's HICN is verified in the first MCBS interview. Prior to the match, Medicare paid claims are retrieved from the Medicare National Claims History (NCH) repository, by HICN. The search file includes all cross-reference numbers and different beneficiary identification codes associated with each beneficiary, ensuring that all bill records are recovered.

Linking and reconciling the retrieved Medicare claims with individual events reported in the survey is a much more complicated process than matching Medicare paid bills with the correct beneficiary. There is no data element, or combination of elements, that provide a consistent basis for matching survey data to Medicare claims across all types of services. There are significant differences in the ways which medical goods and services are characterized in the survey and in the Medicare claims records.

Neither the MCBS nor CMS claims records capture a consistent set of data elements for all services types. For example, the MCBS does not capture total reimbursement for inpatient hospital services because the respondent is not likely to know that information; it is not typically included on the notice of utilization, and thus, this information cannot be used in matching. In other categories, especially Part B services, the total charge of the service is known because it appears on the explanation of benefits, and it is a key match field. Similarly, CMS claims data do not always have the same data elements for different claims types. The carrier control number for each claim is included in CMS' claims history files and the MCBS attempts to collect the carrier control number from the beneficiary's explanation of benefits in the interviews. As a result, this item is extremely useful in matching survey reported utilization to Part B claims. On the other hand, the intermediary control number (Intermediaries process claims for Part A of Medicare) is not available in CMS' files, so even though it is collected in the survey, this data element is not helpful in matching the survey data to Part A bill records. Additional details regarding matching are provided in Technical Appendix C.2.3.4.

C.2.3.1 Survey-reported utilization

In the utilization sections of the MCBS community questionnaire, respondents are asked about all medical events, including visits to practitioners of all types, prescriptions, and any medical equipment or supplies used. (Please find copies of the survey instruments and exact wording of the questions at <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/MCBS/Questionnaires.html>).

Types of utilization collected in the MCBS:

- DU: Dentist visits, including cleaning, x-rays and repair, purchase or repair of dentures, and orthodontic procedures
- ER: Hospital emergency room visits
- IP: Inpatient hospital stays
- IU: Other short-term institutional stays, such as skilled nursing home stays or rehabilitation hospital stays
- MP: Doctor visits, including visits with medical doctors (MD); practitioners such as chiropractors, podiatrists, audiologists and optometrists; mental health professionals such as psychiatrists, psychologists and clinical social workers; therapists such as physical therapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, and intravenous and respiratory therapists; other medical practitioners such as nurses and paramedics; and other places offering medical care, such as clinics, neighborhood health centers, infirmaries and urgent care centers.
- OP: Outpatient visits, including visits to the outpatient department or outpatient clinic of a hospital.

- HP/HF: Home health visits, collected in the survey as visits by professionals or friends. Health professionals include nurses, doctors, social workers, therapists and hospice workers. Friends include persons who do not live with the beneficiary, but help the beneficiary at home with personal care or other daily needs. These persons may be home health aides, homemakers, friends, neighbors or relatives.
- OM: Other medical expenses, including purchase or rental of a variety of items: eyeglasses or contact lenses and hearing aids; orthopedic items such as canes, walkers, wheelchairs and corrective shoes; diabetic supplies; oxygen supplies and equipment; kidney dialysis equipment; hospital beds, commodes, and disposable supplies such as disposable diapers and bandages.
- PM: All prescription medications except those provided by the doctor or practitioner as samples and those provided in an inpatient setting.

In addition to these categories, the community survey instrument is also designed to collect some types of utilization that the respondent may unintentionally omit. This utilization is captured when the beneficiary's Medicare and private health insurance statements are reviewed, and is classified as separate billing doctor (SD), and separate billing lab (SL). The SD and SL categories typically include such things as anesthesiology administered while the beneficiary was an inpatient, lab tests not done at the doctor's office, and the radiologist's interpretation of an x-ray.

The Facility instruments capture similar information about people who are residents of long-term care facilities, including the use of prescribed medicines.

C.2.3.2 CMS-reported utilization

Medicare claims are basically organized by type of provider. The categories of Medicare claims records are as follows:

- Inpatient hospital, psychiatric hospital, Tuberculosis hospital, Christian Science facility and skilled nursing facility bills: Although these records all share the same format, they contain codes that allow them to be separated into these subcategories. For purposes of the match, bills from skilled nursing facilities were separated from the other types of bills, but no further subdivisions were made.
- Home health bills
- Hospice bills
- Outpatient hospital bills
- Part B physician/supplier claims for physician services, diagnostic laboratory and radiology, durable medical equipment and some prescription medicines.
- Part D bills

C.2.3.3 Match categories

In matching the survey-reported utilization to the Medicare claims data, MCBS staff frequently must match a Medicare claim category to multiple MCBS categories, and vice versa. Although there are some clear relationships between the categories of utilization collected in the survey and CMS claims categories, not all categories match neatly.

Event-level matching is actually a series of matches between different categories of Medicare claims and MCBS service types. In conducting these matches MCBS staff employ different match algorithms, depending on the data elements available for the particular categories being matched. Matches are arranged in sequence, so that the most similar survey-reported and Medicare claims categories are compared first. Exhibit C.2.3.3 presents an overview of the categorical matches.

Exhibit C.2.3.3: Overview of event category matches conducted during event-level matching

Matches between similar service types	Matches between less similar service types
IP to Inpatient hospital bills	ER to Inpatient hospital bills
MP, OM, SD, SL to Part B physician/supplier	OP to Inpatient hospital bills
OP to Outpatient hospital bills	IU to Inpatient hospital bills
IU to SNF bills	IP to SNF bills
DU to Part B physician/supplier claims	IP to Outpatient hospital bills
ER to Outpatient hospital bills	OP to Part B physician/supplier claims
HF & HP to Home health agency bills	MP, OM, SD, SL to Outpatient hospital bills

Each match algorithm employs a hierarchy of match criteria which are progressively less restrictive. For example, reported doctor visits are initially compared to claims records by physician's name, date of service, and total charge. If there is not an exact match, the algorithm checks for a match on physician's name and date of service, or total charge and date of service. If there is still no match, the program looks for an exact match on physician's name and total charge, with the date of service match relaxed to dates within one week of each other. The match algorithms not only link survey-reported utilization and Medicare claims records, but also code the records to indicate the strength of the link.

MCBS staff designed the match algorithms to allow survey-reported utilization to be linked to multiple Medicare claims, and vice versa, for two reasons. First, multiple links are often valid. For example, a survey-reported doctor visit may be linked to both a Medicare claim for the physician's services and a Medicare claim for laboratory services connected with the visit. Second, a stronger match may occur later in the series of matches. A survey-reported doctor visit may have a weak link to a Medicare Part B physician/supplier claim and a strong link to a Medicare outpatient claim. MCBS' staff uses the link-strength indicator to resolve situations where the multiple matches are logically inconsistent.

Hospice bills were excluded from the match because there is no clean "hospice" category in the survey data. Facility and home health utilization were matched in only a summary fashion to improve the accuracy of Medicare payment data.

Three outcomes are possible from the attempted match of survey data to Medicare claims data: the information from the two sources agrees (a match); or, information reported in the survey is not present in the Medicare claims data; or, information is present in the Medicare claims data which was not reported in the survey.

- 2015 Cost Supplement File "events"
 - The matching programs produce a set of records which reflect the best combination of survey and Medicare claims categories, and present records from both sources (matched and unmatched) in a uniform format. Since the categories of utilization in the Medicare claims do

not match the survey categories, utilization groups in the 2015 Cost Supplement File are a combination of the two sources.

- ▶ The most disaggregate level of utilization records in the 2015 Cost Supplement File is the “event” level record. Event records combine survey-reported information and Medicare claims data in the seven categories presented: IPE, OPE, IUE, DUE, MPE, PME and FAE. Event records contain a variable to indicate the source of the utilization information--Medicare claims data, survey data, or both-- and a variable linking the event record to the bill data, if both sources provided the information. Event records also provide a consistent analytic unit within a category of utilization.
- Emergency room
 - ▶ The emergency room (ER) survey category was split between IPE and OPE. Under the prospective payment system, emergency room services that result directly in a hospital admission are included in the DRG payment for the inpatient stay, and thus are not associated with any separate charges or claims. Emergency room visits that are not immediately followed by an inpatient admission are classified as outpatient services. For this reason, survey-reported emergency room (ER) utilization was matched to outpatient, then inpatient bill records, and is reflected in the 2015 Cost Supplement File as either OPE or IPE records. Several other survey categories (MP, SD, SL and OM) have been combined to make up the single MPE category. Hospice services do not exist as a separate category of utilization in the survey data, so this category derives from the Medicare claims data.
- Post-match edits
 - ▶ For most types of services, the MCBS collects a date of service to assist in matching survey-reported data to claims records. Respondents may not always recall exact dates, so dates are collected in three independent parts (i.e., month, day and year).
 - ▶ Since the year portion of a survey date may be missing or incorrect, records for services in 2014 and 2016 were not eliminated from the survey file until the match was concluded. Similarly, respondents may “telescope” events, believing them to have taken place recently when in reality they occurred a year or more in the past. As matching Medicare claims might help to identify and eliminate these responses, the Medicare records were also not edited on date until after the match; for the match records included services rendered in 2014 and 2015, as well as 2016. After matching, the event file was edited to exclude all services that were rendered outside of calendar year 2015.
 - ▶ If the survey-reported data matched Medicare claims data, the dates of service on the Medicare record were carried into the event record. Dates of service were used as a match criterion in most of the matches, so in many cases, the dates of service in the event record did not change from those reported.

C.2.3.4 Summary of Match Results

A total of 194,552 Medicare bill events for beneficiaries living in the community were matched against 193,333 survey reports. A match was recorded for 84,999 event records, which is 44 percent of total Medicare bill records events and 44 percent of survey-reported events. The percentage of dollars matched was considerably higher.

Unmatched Medicare events (\$221) were a little more than half as expensive on average as matched events (\$420). This is consistent with general household survey experience, which has shown that more expensive medical events are more likely to be remembered and reported at the interview.

Some small part of the unmatched 109,589 Medicare records are undoubtedly represented in the 107,957 survey-reported events that could not be matched under the matching criteria used.

However, the 107,957 unmatched survey events would be expected to include a substantial share of events that are not covered by Medicare, and therefore would not be expected to match a Medicare paid claim. In addition, only 15,564 of the 107,957 unmatched survey-reported events have a Medicare payment amount. The 109,589 unmatched Medicare billing records strongly suggest that the survey reports seriously understate the number of Medicare services when compared to CMS billing records.

The under-reporting problem was more serious for event counts than for Medicare payments. The 109,589 unmatched Medicare bill events represent 56 percent of events, but only 41 percent of total payments. That is, 56 percent of total dollars on the Medicare bill side were successfully matched with survey reports. Unmatched Medicare events (\$221) were a little more than half as expensive on average as matched events (\$420). This is consistent with general household survey experience, which has shown that more expensive medical events are more likely to be remembered and reported at the interview. This trend is consistent with the hypothesis that survey respondents tend to remember major health events/more expensive events better than minor health treatments.

In addition to correcting for unreported events, the match also helped to fill in missing Medicare payment amounts and correct Medicare payment amounts that had been reported incorrectly. Of the 84,999 survey events matched to Medicare bill records, Medicare was reported as a payer on 76 percent of these events, and a Medicare payment amount was reported on 62 percent of these events. This means that the match and reconciliations generated corrections that made Medicare a payer of record on the 24 percent of cases where this information was originally omitted in the survey reports; and made it possible to determine the correct Medicare payment amount in the 38 percent of survey records where this information was omitted.

Not all services could be cleanly and easily matched from the two sources. The match employed "strength of evidence" criteria and "hierarchical algorithms" in order to identify matches, survey reports only, bill file reports only, and a small number of similar events for which it was not clear whether there was duplicate survey and bill reports or not. The methods and criteria used in the match are discussed in more detail in the Event Level Matching discussion in section of this manual. In addition, Eppig and Edwards' paper, "Computer Matching of MCBS Data with Medicare Claims," presents a full discussion of methods and criteria.³

C.2.3.5 Evidence supporting improved accuracy

On the 84,963 matched events, Medicare should have been reported as a payer on 100 percent of the survey reported events. However, Medicare was only reported as a payer for 64,694 or 76 percent of events. Consequently, the match corrected 24 percent of the records to make Medicare a payer of record.

On the 84,963 matched events, the Medicare payment amount was only reported on 62 percent of survey reports. The match filled in the correct Medicare payment for the remaining 38 percent of survey reports.

Examining 52,405 of the 84,963 matched events where both a Medicare payment and total payment was reported: the survey reported Medicare payments overstated total Medicare payments from

³ Eppig, F. J., and Brad Edwards. "Computer matching of Medicare current beneficiary survey data with Medicare claims." In Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data, p. 191. 1996.

Medicare bill records by \$12.5 billion dollars; the survey reported total payments overstated the total payment amounts from Medicare bill records by \$151 billion; these erroneous survey reported payment amounts suggest that Medicare paid only 37 percent of total payments.

C.2.3.6 Evidence of survey under-reporting

The 109,589 unmatched Medicare paid bill events strongly suggest a high level of under-reporting on the survey. While there are 107,957 unmatched survey reports on the other side, many of these events could not be reasonably expected to be undiscovered matches. For example:

Unmatched survey events unlikely to match an unmatched Medicare bill:

1. 12,285 unmatched survey events were for dental services that are rarely covered by Medicare.
2. 2,386 unmatched survey events had total payments equal to zero. (These were very likely parts of bundles of services that were covered in one global payment on the Medicare side, for example, post-operative services that were covered by a global surgery fee.)
3. Another 33,765 unmatched survey events were for Medicare Advantage enrollees. Virtually all of the Medicare services for these persons are paid through a capitated payment amount and the likelihood is very small that their events ever match a fee for service Medicare paid bill record.
4. There were 804 unmatched survey events where the beneficiary was only entitled to Part A or Part B of Medicare, but not both. Therefore a survey reported service could reasonably not be expected to match a Medicare paid bill record.
5. Another 3,278 unmatched events were provided by the VA or in a military installation where no Medicare bill would be expected.
6. 17,197 unmatched survey events were for other medical services. While Medicare covers durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs, and supplies such as oxygen, it does not cover many items in the broad other medical services category such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, heating pads, incontinence supplies, etc. Average payments for unmatched survey reports of other medical events (\$212) was less than the average survey reported payments for matched events of this type (\$737) but more than total payments for unmatched Medicare claims in the same category (\$234). This suggests that most unmatched survey events for other medical services are probably not undiscovered matches.
7. Taken together, over 69,725 of the 107,957 unmatched survey events either definitely could not, or very likely would not, match a Medicare bill event record. This leaves 38,242 unmatched survey events to be explained.
8. This means 71,346 medical events, or 41 percent of Medicare bill records for community-dwelling original beneficiaries, were not reported in survey interviews. (Calculated using 109,589 unmatched Medicare events minus 38,242 possible undiscovered matches among the unmatched survey events)

Unmatched survey events likely to be undiscovered matches:

9. On other side, 15,564 unmatched survey-reported events reported a dollar amount that Medicare paid for the event. These unmatched survey events are very likely to be undiscovered matches.

Ambiguous events:

10. This leaves 22,678 unmatched survey events to be explained. There are many medical services and supplies that Medicare does not cover such as most alternative medicine services, over the counter remedies, etc.

C.2.3.7 Building a Complete File

Medicare covered services:

- A complete file would include all 84,963 matched events. These events, which were reported on both the survey and in Medicare bill event records, will combine the most accurate and complete information possible from both sources.
- All Medicare bill record unmatched events (109,589) should also be included. These event records are official records of Medicare program payments and will partially correct for survey under-reporting.
- It is more debatable which of the unmatched 107,795 survey records to include. The data include type of service, adjusted file summaries, and all unmatched survey reports except the 15,564 records with a Medicare payment. For the reasons discussed above, these 15,564 records are likely undiscovered matches that would duplicate some of the 109,584 unmatched Medicare bill event records if they were included. For official MCBS reporting purposes, CMS uses all unmatched survey reports except the 15,564 records with a Medicare payment.
- Home health and hospice records, which were not entered in the event level match, should be added into the file.

Total medical services including Medicare covered and non-covered services:

- In addition to the Medicare covered services listed above, Prescription Drug and Long Term Facility records should be added to the file.

C.3 Imputation Information

There are several adjustments made to fill in payment amounts that are missing because the beneficiary did not know how much an event cost, or did not know how the event was paid for (by whom, and how much for each payer). An abbreviated description of the process and procedures used to impute these missing values is available in the 2015 MCBS Methodology Report located on CMS' MCBS website at <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/MCBS/Codebooks.html>.

First a target reimbursement or total payment for the event was established, all possible sources of payment were identified, and then the total payment was distributed across all payers. Missing amounts and payers were filled in using either analytic editing or statistical imputation. This process relied heavily on Medicare administrative records. The guiding principle of retaining as much survey data as possible, and filling in around it, was maintained throughout the process. Where feasible, information about the payers for a specific event, known payment amounts, and target reimbursement were used to determine unknown payment amounts by analytic edits. When insufficient information

was available and analytic editing was impossible, unknown payment amounts were completed by statistical imputation.

Different approaches were used with different categories of utilization to define payers and determine payment amounts. Records submitted to the survey/administrative match (which was discussed in the Technical Appendix C.2.3, Event Level Matching) were handled differently than those not matched. Survey-reported records for dental, medical practitioner, inpatient, outpatient, institutional (other than long term care), and medical equipment and supplies (survey utilization categories DU, MP, SD, SL, IP, OP and IU and OM) were entered into the match with Medicare claims data. After the match, these events were individually assigned target reimbursement amounts, and then source of payment variables and separate payment amounts were calculated for each payer. Other procedures, usually some adaptation of the procedures sketched above, were used to determine payers, target reimbursements, and payments for other categories of utilization. In the next sections we discuss how target reimbursements were established, explain the procedures used for matched utilization (the largest category of utilization), and then discuss the smaller and more specific non-matched categories.

C.3.1 Determining target reimbursement

One of our primary rules was to establish the target reimbursement for an event with a missing total payment prior to determining or imputing the payment distribution. This was done in a way to establish a target reimbursement that was consistent with payments shown for other similar services in the file. In this way, a credible target reimbursement can be used to inform and control the payment distribution. For Medicare covered services, target reimbursements were developed from Medicare claims because this is a more accurate method than determining the amounts paid by individual sources of payment, and summing them.

Another primary rule was to retain survey-reported payment data, even when it was only partial data, wherever possible. There are situations where retaining the reported payment amounts and establishing the target reimbursement amount without regard to individual payment amounts are mutually exclusive. On a few occasions, the target reimbursement had to be adjusted in order to retain reported payment data.

The rules for establishing target reimbursements depend first on whether or not Medicare claims data are available. If the survey-reported data match a Medicare claim record, or if the Medicare claim record was the only source of information about the service (nothing about the service was reported in the survey), the Medicare claim data were used to establish a target reimbursement. The target reimbursements for 45 percent of the events in this file were established using Medicare administrative bill payment data.

If the utilization was only reported in the survey (matching to Medicare claims was not successful in identifying a corresponding claims record), the survey data was used to create the target reimbursement. This occurred for about 55 percent of events in this file.

For a small subset of the survey reported events without a matching Medicare claim, but where Medicare was reported as a payer, a different approach was used to create a target reimbursement. A set of regression models, one for each type of event, was developed to predict the target reimbursement from the total charges reported in the survey.

When the respondent did not report a total charge for the event but indicated that Medicaid was a payer, an imputed target reimbursement was created which was consistent with the generally lower payments made by Medicaid.

C.3.2 Filling in Missing Payments and Payers for Matched and Not Matched Utilization Records

The following procedures were used to determine who paid for each event, how much an event cost in total, and how much each payer paid. These procedures were applied to inpatient, outpatient, institutional (other than long-term care), dental, prescription medicine, and physician and supplier services, and medical equipment and supplies. These procedures were applied to events in the 2015 Cost Supplement File designated: IPE (inpatient), OPE (outpatient), IUE (institutional), DUE (dental), PME (prescribed medicine), and MPE (medical and surgical services, equipment and supplies).

C.3.2.1 Determining potential payers

Regardless of the method used for imputation, payment amounts were only imputed for potential payers. The total reimbursement for an event was distributed among 11 sources of payment (SOP):

- Medicare Fee-for-Service
- Medicaid
- Medicare managed care
- Private insurance managed care
- Veterans' Administration
- Employment-based private health insurance
- Individually purchased private health insurance
- Private insurance, source unknown
- Out-of-pocket
- Uncollected liability
- Other public insurance

Out-of-pocket payments are those payments made by the beneficiary or their family, either as cash or through Social Security or SSI checks to a nursing home. Medicare managed care organizations (MCOs) coverage (i.e., Medicare Part C/Medicare Advantage) is different enough from Fee-for-Service coverage to merit its being reported separately. Non-MCO private insurance is characterized as individually purchased or employment-based because there are differences in cost and coverage depending on type. As this information is not known for residents of nursing homes (the nursing home staff are not likely to know, and thus are not asked, how the insurance was purchased), a third category of private, non-MCO insurance was created for private insurers when the source is not known. Uncollected liability refers to unpaid amounts where there is a legal obligation to pay. If there is an agreement between the provider and a payment source, which reduces the amount that the provider can collect for a service, there is no uncollected liability. On the other hand, if the respondent reports a total amount payable and specific payment amounts for all known sources of payment, and the sum of those payments is less than the total amount payable, the difference is considered an uncollected liability. Other public insurance includes Federal or State programs not included in the other categories, such as State drug programs like PACE in Pennsylvania.

An individual's insurance coverage can change during the course of a year. A health insurance timeline,⁴ created for each person in the 2015 Cost Supplement File, provided the basis for determining the potential payers for each event. The timeline contained complete insurance information, including Medicare entitlement, Medicaid eligibility, and enrollment in Medicare MCOs (Medicare Part C/Medicare Advantage), for every day of the beneficiary's Medicare eligibility during the year. Medicare

⁴ The Health Insurance Timeline segment (HITLINE) containing the types of insurances, the coverage eligibility timeline, and the source information for the coverage is included in the Survey File LDS.

entitlement, Medicaid eligibility, and enrollment in Medicare MCOs were captured from CMS administrative data, while information about private insurance was collected in the insurance portion of the interview, and then supplemented by information learned from statements and Medicare claims. In 1996 we refined the methodology for determining whether Medicaid was a possible payer for an event. We now distinguish whether a respondent has full Medicaid benefits or only Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) or Special Low-income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB) status. If an individual has full Medicaid benefits, then Medicaid is a potential payer for all medical events. If an individual has QMB-only status, then Medicaid is a potential payer for cost sharing amounts on Medicare covered services, but not on medical events not covered by Medicare. If an individual has SLMB-only status, then Medicaid is not a potential payer for any medical events.

C.3.2.2 Payer indicators

A payer indicator code was used to identify definite and potential payers of the total charge for an event. Source of Payment (SOP) flags were used to initialize the payer indicator. Each SOP flag corresponded to one component of the payer indicator, and could have a value ranging from 0 to 4 as shown below.

Source of payment (SOP) flag values:

- 0 - Source definitely did not pay
- 1 - Source definitely did pay, known amount
- 2 - Source definitely did pay, unknown amount
- 3 - Source possibly paid, beneficiary was covered at time of event
- 4 - Source possibly paid, beneficiary may have been covered at time of event

SOP values were set by using survey information about reported events, about the type of provider for the event (that is, whether the service was delivered by a managed care provider or a VA facility), and about the type of insurance coverage and/or program participation. SOP values also depended on Medicare claims data when a survey-reported event corresponded to a Medicare claim (a "matched" event.) Based on all of this information, each source was determined to be a payer, a potential payer, or not a payer of charges for the event.

Payers - A source was a definite payer if the SOP for that source had a value of 1 or 2. An SOP value of 1 indicates that the respondent reported that the payer had paid a portion of the charges and also reported a payment amount, or that Medicare claims data provided that information. An SOP value of 2 means that the respondent reported that a payer paid a portion of the charges, but did not know the exact amount, and no matching Medicare claim was found to provide this information.

Potential payers - A source was a potential payer if the corresponding SOP had a value of 3 or 4. An SOP value of 3 meant that either the beneficiary definitely had that type of insurance coverage at the time of the event and the payer may have paid some amount, and/or the beneficiary received the service from that type of payer (i.e., a managed care provider or a VA facility), but did not report it as a payment source. An SOP value of 4 was used when there was doubt about the beneficiary's insurance coverage during the event or about the event date itself.

Non-payers - If neither the respondent nor the Medicare claims data indicated that a payer had been a source of payment for an event, the SOP was set to 0.

A more comprehensive discussion of the rules used for setting the SOP flags is included in Technical Appendices C.3 and C3.4.

C.3.2.3 Translating payer indicators into sources of payment for matched utilization records only

A value of 1 for a particular payer indicator meant that the payers paid a portion of the total charge for the event, and a value of 0 meant that the payer did not contribute. Final payer indicator values were determined in one of three ways: 1) directly from the corresponding SOP values; 2) through analytic edits; or 3) through statistical imputation.

Different rules applied when payer indicator values were set directly from the corresponding SOP values, depending on whether the SOP was determined to be a definite payer, a potential payer, or a non-payer. If the source was a definite payer and the payment amount was known (SOP=1), the corresponding payer indicator was set to 1. If the source was a definite payer but the payment amount was not known (SOP=2), the payer indicator value was set to 1 with one exception: if the event was for dental care or for durable or nondurable medical equipment not usually covered by Medicare, the Medicare payer component was set to 0. The rationale was that if the respondent was not able to report the Medicare payment, then it was more likely that Medicare had not actually paid for the ordinarily non-covered services.

When the SOP was a potential payer (SOP=3 or 4), the corresponding payer indicator was set to missing, and imputed (as 0 or 1) in a later step. However, the general rule for setting a payer indicator value based on a corresponding SOP value of 3 or 4 was sometimes modified by the analytic edits, as discussed next.

NOTE: The Medicare payer indicator value was never set to missing. It was always equal to 0 or 1, unless the respondent reported that Medicare had contributed toward the event but did not report the amount and the survey data was not matched to a Medicare claim. In this case, the SOP value for Medicare was set to 2 and the Medicare payer indicator was determined as above.

When the SOP was not a payer (SOP=0), the corresponding payer indicator was set to 0, except when the SOP was out-of-pocket or uncollected liability. If the SOP was out-of-pocket or uncollected liability and equal to zero, the payer indicator was set to missing, to be imputed (as 0 or 1) in a later step.

C.3.2.4 Analytic edits

Analytic editing of charge and source of payment data at the event level also determined some payer indicator values. The general goal of the analytic edits was to resolve as many events as possible (i.e., to fully allocate total charges to payers) and to set as many payer indicator values as possible based on logic and knowledge of payer policies. The edits resolved some events without using a hotdeck procedure to impute payment sources or amounts.

The analytic edits relied on having both unambiguous SOP values and external information about interaction among the insurance or payment sources. Edits for three of the payment sources (Medicaid, MCOs, and VA) depended on information specific to those payers, but payer indicators for other payment sources were also affected. The analytic edits are discussed fully in Technical Appendix C.3.4, as they apply to each source of payment.

Medicaid: Analytic edits were used extensively when Medicaid was a potential or actual source of payment for an event. One set of edits, designed to reflect the role of Medicaid as the payer of last resort, ensured that Medicaid could not be a payer if payments were reported or imputed for another third-party insurer (except Medicare), or if the provider was an MCO or VA facility. Another set of edits was developed for dual Medicaid/Medicare eligible beneficiaries whose cost-sharing liability is covered by Medicaid. For additional information, see Technical Appendix C.3.4.

Private and Medicare MCOs (Medicare Part C/Medicare Advantage): Managed care organizations (especially Medicare-contracting MCOs) often operate differently than other third-party payers and tend to have unique payment patterns. For instance, risk and (to a lesser extent) cost Medicare MCOs are paid a set fee per enrolled Medicare beneficiary (called a capitated amount) designed to compensate the MCO for the expected costs of delivering Medicare's package of benefits. There are no Medicare claims or Medicare or insurance statements indicating the total charge for events covered by the capitated amount. Often the respondent only knows the copay amount, if there was one. Also, MCOs often provide "Medigap"-type coverage by paying for most of the member's deductibles and copays for Medicare-covered benefits. A beneficiary who belongs to an MCO does not need private Medigap insurance or Medicaid coverage for these amounts. Thus, payment patterns for MCO beneficiaries tend to be simpler than those for Fee-for-Service beneficiaries. The set of analytic edits for MCOs attempted to account for these simplified patterns and for the respondent's usual inability to report charges and payments for events. The MCO edits also attempted to avoid creating "illogical" payment patterns.

Veterans' Administration (VA) coverage: If VA was a payer, no uncollected liability amounts were allowed. As both the insurer and provider of services, the VA does not "charge" more than it will be reimbursed by other payers. In this respect, services provided by the VA are similar to those provided by MCOs.

General Edits: At the beginning of the analytic editing, and after each main section of edits, an attempt was made to resolve events through addition or subtraction. Events without a known total charge but with a complete payer indicator vector (i.e., each payer was identified as either having paid or not paid for an event and each payer's amount was known) were completed by summing across all payment sources to derive the total charge. Events with a known total charge and complete except for one missing payment amount or payment source, were completed by subtraction. The excess of charges over known payment amounts was attributed to the known payer, or the one missing payer indicator was set to 1 and the excess allocated to that payer.

If a service was provided free of charge, all payer indicators and payment amounts were set to 0. However, if the respondent reported an event as free, but also reported that a source other than Medicare or Medicaid paid something for the event, the total charge was reset to "missing," and imputed.

If a source was a potential payer for an event, or if the respondent reported that the payer had contributed to an event but did not know the amount, it was assumed that the payer was not actually a source, if the current sum of reported payments equaled the reported total charge.

Payer Indicator Imputation: For information on this process, please see the 2015 MCBS Methodology Report located on CMS' MCBS website at <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/MCBS/Codebooks.html>.

If Medicaid was a payer, a Medicaid payment amount was calculated as a percentage of coinsurance and deductible for the Medicare service.

C.3.2.5 Other Utilization (Not Matched)

The following procedures were used to determine who paid for each event, how much an event cost altogether, and how much each payer paid, for events that we did not attempt to match to Medicare claims data on a service-by-service basis. These procedures were applied to home health and hospice services. (The procedures used for missing payments or payers for prescription drugs and facility utilization are described separately below. For information on the editing and creation of these types of utilization, refer to the Prescription Drugs and Long Term Facility segments). Long term facility and

prescription drug utilization are presented in the 2015 Cost Supplement File as event-level records designated: FAE (facility) and PME (prescription medicines). Hospice and home health records are presented as summary records only.

C.3.2.6 Hospice Services

Hospice utilization is unusual in terms of Medicare administrative records because it is the only utilization that is recorded in two different ways, in two different files. The beginning and ending dates of the hospice benefit periods are recorded in Medicare Administrative enrollment data, while the bill records are part of the National Claims History repository (NCH). This dual reporting served as an internal check on the dates of service on the billing records.

C.3.2.7 Determining and imputing payment amounts for Hospice Services

With a target reimbursement amount (this represents the “total cost” of the event), and payer indicator values indicating which payers contributed some payment toward the total, the share “amounts” paid by the individual payers could be determined.

If Medicare payments were known to be incomplete, then utilization for the missing periods was completed by editing from the existing billing records. The hospice benefit is paid on a per-diem basis, and the missing data were completed with average per diem rates calculated from existing bills. Virtually all services provided to the hospice beneficiary are fully covered by Medicare, and as there are no copayments or deductibles, there is no cost sharing (Prescribed medicines are an exception, as there may be a small copayment for drugs, which are reported separately, and also inpatient respite care for which the patient pays 5 percent of the Medicare allowed rate - under \$5 in 2015). Hence, the Medicare reimbursement is the target reimbursement, and Medicare is the sole payer of hospice bills. Hospice bills were not matched; as a result, there is some overlap between hospice utilization and events reported in the survey. The overlapping survey events are usually, but not always, home health events. When an unmatched survey event occurs at the same time as a Hospice event (i.e. is an overlapping event), the event is retained but the payer indicators and amounts are zeroed out to prevent double counting. Home health events do not get this treatment because home health events are not available in the event-level data.

C.3.2.8 Home Health

The home health use and payment records in the Cost Supplement File are designed to represent events where medical care, as opposed to personal care and support, was furnished to the beneficiary. The decision to include only medical services in the user file in no way derogates the importance of unpaid assistance in maintaining the health and well-being of Medicare beneficiaries. It simply reflects the primary emphasis of the MCBS Cost Supplement File, which focuses on use of, and payment for, formal medical care services.

Home health events, like prescription drug events, are undated on the survey. For reference periods that spanned two years, the first step was to allocate services proportionately into 2015. The rules used to do this were identical with the procedures detailed in section C.3.3.1: Adjustments for Missing Days and Undated Use. At this stage, a home health “event” could have represented one or more home health visits. Bundled events with multiple visits were unbundled for the allocation of home health services across years. (Note, however, that home health use and costs are summarized at the type of service and person levels in this file, and home health “event” level data are not shown. The summaries do contain counts of home health visits.)

Survey event records were originally classified in the interview according to whether a professional or a friend provided the home health services. This distinction was used in separating out home health services that were not medical in nature. In winnowing down the file to medical services only, the following decision rules were used to exclude non-medical home health services:

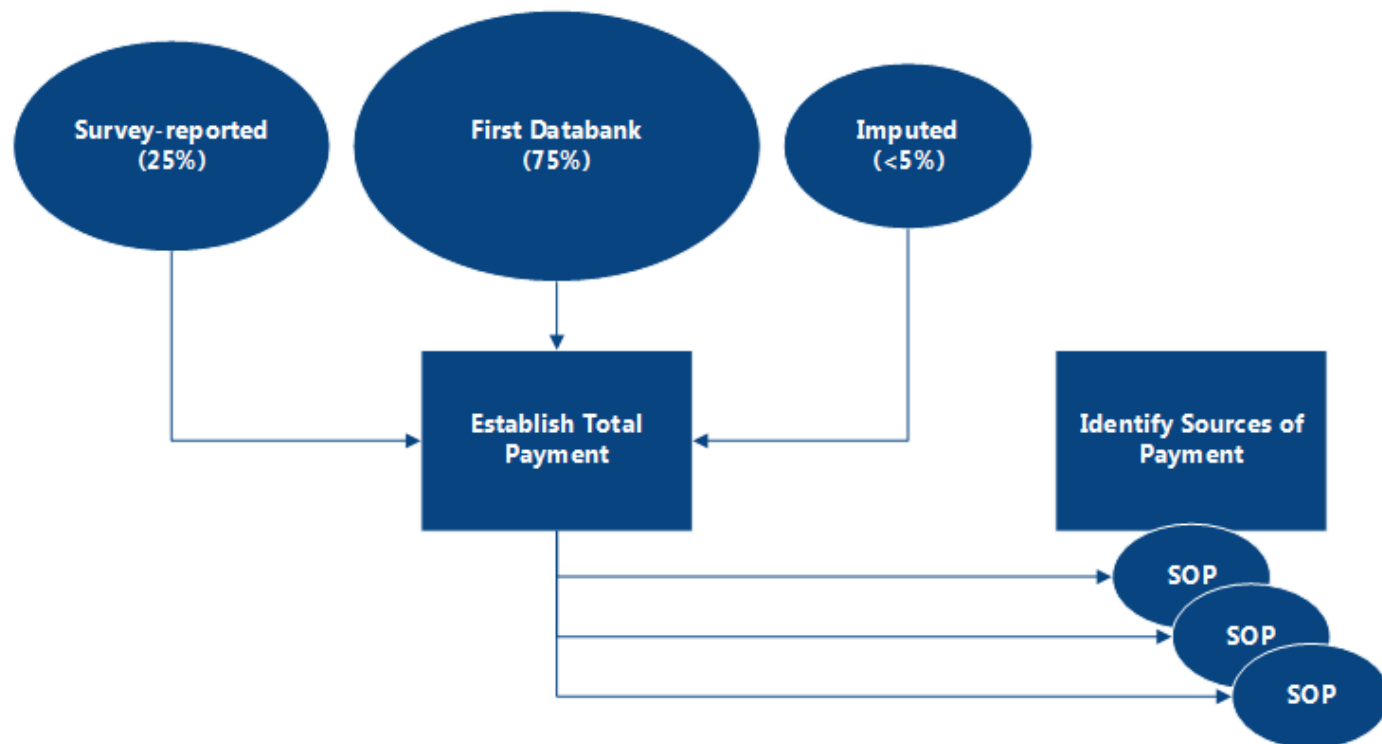
1. Exclude services provided by a friend where the out-of-pocket payment, if any, was equal to the total charge for the service. (The reasoning is that even if the friend was paid for delivering a service, it was very likely non-medical in nature if there was no other payer).
2. Exclude services provided by a professional where the out-of-pocket payment was equal to the total charge for the service AND the person answered NO to the question whether the professional gives nursing/medical treatment.
3. Exclude all housekeeping/cleaning services unless Medicaid is listed as a payer.
4. Exclude all "meals-on-wheels" types of services.

After these allocation and exclusion operations, the remaining survey reported medical home health services were matched (not at the event level but at the person level only) to Medicare bills for home health services. The survey reports and Medicare bills were combined to provide the most accurate and complete summary possible of number of visits and payments (broken down by source of payment such as Medicare, out-of-pocket, etc.).

C.3.2.9 Prescription Drug Data

Prior to 2006, all prescription drug data was based on information collected in the survey. Due to the advent of Part D, beginning in 2006 Part D Events (PDEs) were available for Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Advantage Part D Plans (MAPDs) or stand-alone Part D Plans (PDPs). For survey-reported events that matched to PDEs, information on the drug "claim" was used to calculate the total payment field as well as the other payer fields. The approach used to fill in missing drug payment data for unmatched events was similar to that used for other missing payment amounts described above. The first step was to establish a total payment amount for each drug event. First preference was given to using survey reports of the total payment for the drug. For approximately one-quarter of survey-only drug events on the file, the total payment was reported. For about three-quarters of the survey-only drug events, an administrative drug pricing source (FDB (First Databank) MedKnowledge (formerly NDDF Plus)) was used to impute prices. The administrative source was used only when no total payment was reported, and it was rarely used to supersede the survey reported payment. Finally, a small proportion (<5%) of survey-only drug events had total payments established using statistical imputation techniques.

After the total payment was established for each drug event, potential sources of payment were identified using a similar approach to that outlined earlier. In the last step, the total payment amount was distributed across the sources of payment (see Exhibit C.3.2.9). In cases where a total payment was available from either a survey report or the FDB, unknown payment amounts for a specific payer were handled by accounting techniques and analytic edits before employing statistical imputation. In a small percentage of cases where the total payment was derived by statistical imputation, the payer amounts were also derived through statistical imputation.

Exhibit C.3.2.9: Establishing Total Payment Amount and Allocating to Sources of Payers**Preparation of survey-reported data**

Prior to matching or imputation, the prescription drug data collected in the survey were edited for consistent spelling. Although respondents are encouraged to save empty packaging from all prescription medicines, inconsistencies in spelling are sometimes introduced as the data are collected. As a first step in processing the prescription drug data, MCBS staff edited the records to ensure that the same drug was always reported in the same way. All unique drug name spellings supplied in the survey from Winter 1992 (Round 2) through Fall 2015 (Round 73), including both community and facility survey responses, were gathered together in a single list. Using the FDB, MCBS staff manually assigned corrected spellings to each unique supplied spelling.

Preparation of FDB (First Databank) data

The 2016 FDB served as a pricing reference and as a source of therapeutic class for prescription medicines. However, survey reports of total payments were given preference over a FDB price because we could not match MCBS records and FDB records exactly on all fields. The FDB generally identifies the name, form, strength, and packaging size of the drug in a single entry. The MCBS collected prescription size in the survey, but could not collect the packaging size of the drug prescribed. In the survey, form and strength are also collected, but as separate items, not as part of the name. In the initial match, therefore, a FDB name "Septra DS Tab 800 mg" had to be changed to "Septra DS," to increase the likelihood of a match between the two sources on name.

Assignment of wholesale prices

In the FDB, a wholesale price is assigned to each National Drug Code (NDC) entry. The NDC is an 11-digit code; the first five digits define the manufacturer or labeler, the next four digits identify the drug product, and the last two digits identify the packaging size. As noted above, the MCBS does not collect packaging size, but prescription size, and unit average wholesale prices can differ substantially by packaging size. Using a relative frequency distribution of packaging sizes within each drug type, weighted by utilization rates from Part D prescription drug event data, MCBS staff developed a composite price for drugs that come in multiple package sizes.

After both survey data and FDB data were cleaned as described, survey prescription data were matched to the modified FDB information by drug name, form, strength and packaging size, in that order, to develop an wholesale acquisition cost. Often, we were not able to match on all four variables. If the survey drug name was not known or could not be matched, a wholesale acquisition cost was imputed. If the drug name was known but form or strength was not known, the missing characteristic was imputed and the wholesale acquisition cost was then obtained through a match to the FDB. For example, if the respondent reported a prescription of Diamox but did not know the strength, a wholesale acquisition cost was imputed using the weighted average price of all Diamox prescriptions, this weighted average price was developed using Part D prescription drug event data.

A small number of survey entries could not be translated to any drug listed in the FDB. In general, these entries were either misspellings that made it impossible to determine the drug name or not really even a specific drug (e.g. "little green pills"). These entries were classed as "untranslatable," and an average price was imputed based on frequency distributions of drug claims from Part D prescription drug event data. In some cases the size of the prescription was known but the price was not. Average unit costs (per pill, per milliliter, etc.) were then multiplied by the prescription size, to derive a whole prescription cost. In other cases, prescription size was estimated through the respondent's answers to a series of probe questions, which were asked during the interview when the respondent did not know the size of the prescription.

Converting wholesale acquisition cost into event price

Establishing a price for prescription drug records with no survey reported price began with the assignment of wholesale acquisition cost. Event prices that were less than \$.50 were reset to missing, and imputed statistically. Non-missing wholesale prices were multiplied by a pricing factor that varied depending on the likely payer(s) of the event. Six pricing factors were developed: retail, managed care organization, VA, Medicaid, employer sponsored and other public insurer. The retail pricing factor was actually a series of factors which reflected empirical evidence of the relationship between the wholesale acquisition cost and what the respondents reported paying. The retail factor was 391 percent, 170 percent, or 64 percent, depending on the wholesale price of the drug. The managed care pricing factor estimates that MCOs pay approximately 151 percent of the wholesale acquisition cost of prescription medicines. The VA factor was developed using VA drug cost data that was provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Medicaid pricing factor was developed using composite data from CMS' Medicaid Drug Rebate System, and included a dispensing fee of \$4.77, a discount off the wholesale acquisition cost (53 percent) and a rebate percentage of 24.1 percent. The employer-sponsored insurer is 104 percent of the wholesale acquisition cost.

Determining target reimbursement

Target reimbursements were developed differently for prescription medicines than for other services. (Target reimbursements for other types of services are described above in Technical Appendix C.3.1). If Medicare claims data was unavailable, adjusted "event prices" were used to develop target reimbursements.

The target reimbursement is defined as the price that the beneficiary paid for a single purchase of a single drug. For single purchases (one unique medicine, purchased only once and not refilled), the price reported by the respondent was the target reimbursement.

If the respondent could not give a price, the event price, adjusted by the appropriate pricing factor (discussed below) was the target reimbursement. For multiple purchases (a single prescription, filled multiple times, or multiple prescriptions), the target reimbursement was developed as for single purchases then divided by the number of purchases to yield a target reimbursement for each purchase.

If several drugs were reported together ("bundled"), but the total cost was not known, a target reimbursement was developed for each drug in the bundle, based upon the event price adjusted by the appropriate pricing factor. If several drugs were bundled together and a total cost was reported, that total cost was used to control the imputation of the individual drug prices. A relative percentage of the total cost was developed for each drug, using the event price adjusted by the appropriate pricing factor, then those percentages were applied to the reported total cost and the result became the target reimbursement for each drug. If the event price for one or more of the drugs in the bundle was missing, an average price for all strengths and forms of the drug was used in the computation, unless the drug name was not known, in which case an average event price was used. These averages were then used to calculate relative percentages, which were then applied to the amount reported in the survey for the bundle.

Determining potential payers

Potential payers for prescription medicines were determined in essentially the same way that potential payers were identified for matched utilization.

C.3.2.10 Adjustments for Missing Days and Undated Use

This section describes the adjustments made (at the person and service level, but not at the event level) to:

1. Compensate for data that are missing because some periods of the beneficiary's Medicare entitlement were not covered by interviews. CMS administrative records are used to establish the exact period of Medicare entitlement during 2015 and calculating the number of Medicare days;
2. Allocate undated survey events, primarily prescription drugs and some other medical equipment, between years where interview reference periods spanned two years.

Calculating Medicare covered days

It is important to define, for each beneficiary in the sample, the exact period of Medicare entitlement during 2015. It is also important to accurately count the number of days in each setting for persons living in the community and living in long term care facilities.

For most beneficiaries, the period covered by the survey and the period of the beneficiary's Medicare entitlement are identical: they both cover all 365 days of 2015. There are, however, exceptions where the survey period and the entitlement period do not coincide exactly. Differences between the survey and Medicare entitlement dates fall into two categories: the survey period is greater than the Medicare entitlement period; or, the survey period falls short of the Medicare entitlement period.

In a few cases, the date of death recorded in the survey does not agree with the date of death in CMS records. In these cases, the date of death collected in the survey appears as the latest boundary for Medicare covered days, unless CMS billing data indicated that the date of death occurred after the survey reported date of death.

The Medicare entitlement period is longer than the period covered by the survey when a beneficiary left the survey before the end of 2015, or died without naming a proxy respondent. The most common reason for incomplete data is the beneficiary's refusal to participate further in the survey. If the beneficiary participated in the survey for at least 60 percent of the period they were eligible for Medicare during the year, the beneficiary was retained for the 2015 Cost Supplement File. If the

beneficiary left the survey earlier, that is, the interviews covered less than 60 percent of this sample person's eligibility in 2015, the beneficiary and the survey data were not retained.⁵

When a sample beneficiary dies or otherwise terminates entitlement to Medicare, a closing interview is conducted with a proxy, or with nursing home staff, if the beneficiary is institutionalized. In this way, the survey is designed to capture complete information about people who die or lose entitlement before the end of the year. In a few cases, the beneficiary cooperated with the interviewers for most of the year but died without naming a proxy, leaving unreported the period of time between the last interview and the beneficiary's death. In these cases, as with the beneficiaries who stopped participating in the survey or those who were newly entering the survey as part of the incoming panel, we used what the beneficiary reported during interviews and Medicare billing data (which is known) to guide the imputation of non-covered services (which are not known) to fill in the gaps in reporting.

Calculating community days and facility days

The MCBS sample includes people who are institutionalized as well as those who live in the community, and follows people as they make the transition from one type of living situation to the other. For purposes of analysis, it is important to be able to identify people in either situation, and for people who made a transition during the year, to be able to place them in one category or the other for the appropriate amount of time. We provide three variables in the Residence Timeline segment to show a person's status in this regard: total number of days entitled to Medicare (D_T DAYS); number of days where the beneficiary was living in the community (D_C DAYS); and number of days where the beneficiary was living in a facility (D_F DAYS).

- Group I - Information about the community/facility status for this group was collected in each interview in 2015. This is the only group that will ever show a transition from community to facility, or vice versa.
- Groups II and III - For beneficiaries in the Incoming Panel Samples, we deemed the entire period of Medicare entitlement to be in the same situation as we found them at the initial interview. If a beneficiary was in the community when initially interviewed in Fall 2015, the beneficiary was deemed to have been living in the community for the entire Medicare entitlement period. Similar logic applies for residents of facilities.

Once the periods of Medicare entitlement and living situations are established, utilization reported in the survey is validated by and, in many cases, supplemented by information reported on claims and bills from CMS' national claims history database. This is accomplished by the matching survey-reported utilization to the CMS records that was described earlier in the section on Filling the Gaps.

Allocating services between years

The cost and utilization data collected during the 2015 interviews cover more than just that calendar year. Each interview serves as a boundary to the next interview - the beneficiary describes medical care that took place "since the last interview" - and those boundaries are generally not the beginning or ending of the calendar year. As a result, the first (Fall Round 70) or last (Winter 2016 Round 74) interviews generally include utilization that covers part of two calendar years. To adjust the utilization in these cases, dated event records were edited to remove those that took place outside of 2015, and undated events (prescription medicines) were pro-rated according to the number of 2015 days in the interview reference period to total days in the reference period.

⁵ This population aligns with the Cost Supplement ever enrolled weights population. Please see section 3.6 of this document and the 2015 MCBS Methodology Report for more information on the ever enrolled weights.

Simply pro-rating use between the two calendar years was considered, but rejected. By assuming that use occurred in both years, this procedure could overstate the number and rate of persons using services in a year. In place of this, a random number generator was used to assign services to calendar years. The probability of an event being placed in 2015 was based upon the ratio of 2015 days in the reference period to total days in the reference period. For example, assume a reference period had 120 days and 90 of these days were in 2015. For each event, a random number between 1 and 120 was generated. For all events where the random number was 90 or less, the service was allocated to 2015. For all events with random numbers between 91 and 120, the service was allocated to the other year.

Filling in Medicare covered days not surveyed for PM data only

When there is a gap in survey data, that is, a period for which a sample person was enrolled in Medicare but was not covered by a survey interview, it is necessary to estimate the medical service usage during that gap period. For persons with gaps who were interviewed in 2015, reported services were simply prorated upward to cover the gap. For example, for prescription drugs the number of prescriptions per day were calculated for the interview period, and multiplied by the number of gap days. This assumes, in effect, that the person used prescriptions at the same rate in the interview and gap periods. Likewise, to get adjusted sums for all payers, the cost per prescription per payer per day was calculated, and multiplied by the adjusted number of prescriptions for each payer.

If the respondent was not interviewed, a different approach was used. To cover these non-interview gap periods, a donor was selected who was similar to the person in terms of personal and economic characteristics. The donor's use of prescription drugs (measured in prescriptions per day and cost per prescription per payer per day) was used to impute use and payment data.

C.3.3 Analytic Edits of Sources of Payment (SOP) Values for Non-PM Events

The general goal of the analytic edits is to resolve as many events as possible (i.e., to fully allocate total charges to payers) and to set as many payer indicator values as possible based on logic. The edits resolved some events without using a hotdeck procedure to impute payment sources or amounts.

C.3.3.1 Medicaid

Analytic edits were used extensively when Medicaid was a potential or actual source of payment for an event. One set of edits--designed to reflect the role of Medicaid as the payer of last resort--ensured that Medicaid could not be a payer if payments were reported or imputed for another third-party insurer (except Medicare), or if the provider was a MCO or VA facility. Another set of edits was developed for dual Medicaid/Medicare eligible beneficiaries whose cost-sharing liability is covered by Medicaid.

The following Medicaid edits ensured that Medicaid and another payer (except for Medicare and out-of-pocket) were never both sources of payment for the same event:

1. If private insurance, the VA, an MCO, or other private or public insurance (not Medicaid or Medicare) was a source of payment for an event, it was assumed that Medicaid was not also a payer (even if the respondent had reported a Medicaid payment) and the Medicaid payer indicator component was set to 0.⁶

⁶ The interaction of Medicaid and the category "uncollected liability" was handled slightly differently. If Medicaid were only a potential payer for an event but the respondent had reported there was some uncollected liability, Medicaid was assumed not

2. If Medicaid was reported as a definite payer for an event, all other payers with a payer indicator value of missing were “turned off” as potential payers (set to 0).⁷
3. If the Medicaid payer indicator value was missing (i.e., Medicaid was a potential but not definite payer for an event), and it was uncertain whether out-of-pocket, other public insurance, MCO, VA, or uncollected liability were sources of payment (i.e., their corresponding payer indicator values were missing), it was assumed that Medicaid was a more likely payer and the payer indicator values for the other payers were set to 0.
4. If, after the payer indicator value imputations (described below), both private insurance and Medicaid were imputed as payers for an event, it was assumed that Medicaid was not a payer and its payer indicator component was reset to 0.

Out-of-pocket payments were allowed when Medicaid was a payer only if the respondent was able to report the out-of-pocket amount(s). Medicaid picks up copays and deductibles for dual eligibles and Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries and the respondent has no out-of-pocket costs for Medicare-covered services.

Out-of-pocket payments were allowed when Medicaid was a payer only if the respondent was able to report the out-of-pocket amount(s). Medicaid may cover copays and deductibles for dual eligibles and Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries such that the respondent has no out-of-pocket costs for Medicare-covered services.

C.3.3.2 Private and Medicare MCOs

MCOs (especially Medicare-contracting MCOs) often operate differently than other third-party payers and tend to have unique payment patterns. For instance, risk and (to a lesser extent) cost Medicare MCOs are paid a set fee per enrolled Medicare beneficiary (called a capitated amount) designed to compensate the MCO for the expected costs of delivering Medicare's package of benefits. There are no Medicare claims or Medicare or insurance statements indicating the total charge for events covered by the capitated amount.

Often the respondent only knows the copay amount, if there was one. Also, MCOs often provide “Medigap”-type coverage by paying for most of the deductibles and copays for Medicare-covered benefits. A beneficiary who belongs to an MCO does not need private Medigap insurance or Medicaid coverage for these amounts. Thus, payment patterns for MCO beneficiaries tend to be simpler than those for fee-for-service beneficiaries. The set of analytic edits for MCOs attempted to account for these simplified patterns and for the respondent's usual inability to report charges and payments for events. The MCO edits also attempted to avoid creating “illogical” payment patterns.

1. If an MCO beneficiary reported a whole dollar total charge that was \$15 or less, if the reported out-of-pocket amount equaled the reported total charge, and if there was no insurance statement, the reported total charge most likely represented only the beneficiary's out-of-pocket cost, not the full cost of the event. Therefore, the total charge was set to

to have paid for the event. However, if the respondent reported that Medicaid had paid for an event, it was assumed there was, in fact, no uncollected liability even if the respondent had reported one. In many states, Medicaid payment rates are less than Medicare's and the state bases its copayment amounts on its own approved provider rates so that there is no “uncollected liability.”

⁷ Medicare was not included in this edit since its payer indicator value was never missing.

missing and imputed later in the program. In addition, the payer indicator component for MCO was set to 1 and all other payers (except for out-of-pocket) were set to 0.

2. An SOP value of 3 for dental and medical provider events for MCO beneficiaries had a different interpretation than for other payers. MCO members were asked if the dental or medical provider service had been delivered by one of the MCO's providers or by an MCO-referred provider. If the answer to either of these questions was "yes," the MCO SOP value was set to 3 and the corresponding payer indicator value was set to 1 instead of missing.
3. If an event occurred while the sample beneficiary belonged to a Medicare MCO, if the MCO was reported as a definite payer, and if there was no matching Medicare claim and no insurance statement, all other payers (including Medicare) except out-of-pocket were assumed not to have paid for the event.⁸
4. If the MCO was a definite payer for an event, but information on the amount of the MCO's contribution or the total charge was unknown, other potential payers (excluding Medicare) with missing payer indicator values were set to 0.⁹
5. If the MCO was a definite payer for the event, but information on the amount of the MCO's contribution or the total charge was unknown, other payers (including Medicare) with missing payment amounts were set to 0 even though the respondent reported them to be payers.
6. In some cases, the amount paid by the MCO was less than the total reported charge for an event and there were no other reported payment sources. For these events, one other payer's missing payer indicator component was set to 1 to receive the residual dollars, in the following order: out-of-pocket, uncollected liability, Medigap insurance, private employer-sponsored insurance, other insurance, VA. Out-of-pocket was listed first as the most likely payer to have paid the remaining amount for an MCO event.
7. If the payer indicator value for MCO was missing and if VA was a payer for the event or if there was an insurance statement, the MCO payer indicator component was set to 0. It was assumed that the sample beneficiary's MCO would not be liable for any costs for VA-provided services. It was also assumed that if the respondent had a statement that did not indicate that the MCO paid for the service, the MCO most likely was not a payer.

C.3.3.3 VA coverage

If VA was a payer, no uncollected liability amounts were allowed. As both the insurer and provider of services, the VA does not "charge" more than it will be reimbursed by other payers. In this respect, services provided by the VA are similar to those provided by MCOs.

C.3.3.4 General Edits

At the beginning of the analytic editing, and after each main section of edits, an attempt was made to resolve events through addition or subtraction. Events without a known total charge but with a

⁸ In these cases, it was also assumed that any total charges reported by the respondent were probably not accurate since, without an insurance statement, Medicare Advantage/Managed Care Organization beneficiaries rarely know the total charge for an event. The total charge for the event was set to missing and imputed later in the program.

⁹ If the amount of the Medicare Advantage/Managed Care Organization's contribution or the total charge was not reported, other potential payers could be turned off without creating inconsistent payments and charges for the event.

complete payment vector (i.e., each payer was identified as either having paid or not paid for an event and each payer's amount was known) were completed by summing across all payment sources to derive the total charge. Events with a known total charge and complete except for one missing payment amount or payment source were completed by subtraction. The excess of charges over known payment amounts was attributed to the known payer, or the one missing delta was set to 1 and the excess allocated to that payer. If a service was provided free of charge, all delta values and payment amounts were set to 0.¹⁰

If a source was a potential payer for an event, or if the respondent reported that the payer had contributed to an event but did not know the amount, it was assumed that the payer was not actually a source if the current sum of reported payments equaled the reported total charge.

C.3.4 Setting SOP Flags

Each beneficiary's health insurance time line, survey-reported events and Medicare claims were used to establish an indicator variable (SOP flag) for each of the source of payment (SOP) categories. Information in the SOP flags was, in turn, used to determine the corresponding payer indicator variables, which were used in imputation to determine whether or not a possible source of payment actually paid something toward the cost of an event.

This section outlines the rules that applied to the process of setting the values of the SOP flags. SOP flags can have one of five possible values:

- 0 = Source definitely did not pay
- 1 = Source reported as a payer, amount known
- 2 = Source reported as a payer, amount unknown
- 3 = Source possibly a payer, beneficiary was covered at the time of the event by applicable insurance
- 4 = Source possibly paid, but dates of insurance coverage, or of the event itself, are not clear

C.3.4.1 SOP Medicare

Medicare Part A and Part B entitlement dates established the period of Medicare coverage.

1. If the sample beneficiary was entitled to Medicare Part A benefits, Medicare was a potential source of payment for: Inpatient hospital -- IP events, SNF -- IU events and Home Health -- HP and HF events. The initial value of the Medicare SOP flag was 3 (possible payer) for these event types.
2. If the sample beneficiary was entitled to Medicare Part B benefits, Medicare was a potential source of payment for: Outpatient hospital -- OP events and Part B Physician/Supplier services - - DU, ER, HP, HF, MP, SD, SL and OM events. The initial value of the Medicare SOP flag was 3 (possible payer) for these event types.

¹⁰ If the event was reported as free, but the respondent had also reported that a source other than Medicare or Medicaid had paid something for the event, the total charge was set to missing and imputed.

C.3.4.2 SOP Medicaid

If either the respondent or CMS administrative data indicated that the sample beneficiary had Medicaid coverage, the Medicaid SOP flag was initially set to 3 for all events which occurred during the period of Medicaid coverage.

C.3.4.3 SOP Managed care

The managed care flag was set based on information in the beneficiary's health insurance time line and CMS' administrative records of managed care enrollments.

1. If CMS administrative records indicated that the beneficiary was enrolled in a Medicare managed care plan but the beneficiary did not report the enrollment, the Managed care SOP flag was initialized to a value of 4 for all events that occurred during the beneficiary's enrollment.
2. We set the HMO SOP flag to 4, for all events except DU, MP, and PM, if the Health insurance section shows that the beneficiary was in an MCO, whether or not it is a Medicare MCO.
3. For DU and MP events where HMOASSOC and HMOREFER are applicable, if either HMOASSOC or HMOREFER = 1, the MCO SOP flag was set to 3 (possible payer, coverage definite); otherwise, if the respondent answered don't know (-7, -8 or -9) to either HMOASSOC or HMOREFER, the MCO SOP flag was set to 4 (possible payer, coverage not definite); else we set the MCO SOP flag to 0 (MCO did not pay).
4. For PM events, the MCO SOP flag was initialized to 3 if the respondent indicated that the MCO covers dental services, otherwise the MCO SOP flag was initialized to 4.

C.3.4.4 SOP Veterans Administration

The VA SOP flag was provided in the interview by the respondent.

1. For all event types except prescription medicines, if the respondent indicated that the service was provided by a VA hospital or clinic, the VA SOP flag was set to 3; if the respondent was not certain that the service was provided by the VA, the VA SOP flag was set to 4; else the VA SOP flag was set to 0.
2. For drug events, the VA SOP flag was set to 4 if the VA paid a known amount for some other drug in the same round.

C.3.4.5 SOP Private health insurance

Employer based information about private health insurance (PHI) as a payment source was provided in the insurance section of the interview, by the respondent, and through insurance statements. Information about the source of the policy (used to differentiate between employer-sponsored, and individually purchased private health insurance) was also provided by the respondent in the insurance section of the interview.

1. The employer-sponsored PHI SOP flag was set to 3 for all types of services, except prescribed medicines, which occurred while the sample beneficiary was covered by employer-sponsored health insurance, based on the health insurance timeline and the date of the event.
2. For prescribed medicines, employer-sponsored health insurance was considered a possible source of payment (initial value SOP=3) if the respondent said that the plan covered drugs. If

the respondent said that the plan did not cover drugs, but reported a specific amount the plan paid for another PM event, the employer-sponsored PHI SOP flag for all PM events during the same round was set to 4.

3. If the event date was missing or ambiguous and the sample beneficiary's insurance coverage changed during the round, the employer-sponsored PHI SOP flag was set to 4 instead of 3 where applicable.

Individually purchased information about private health insurance as a payment source was provided in the insurance section of the interview, by the respondent, and through insurance statements. Information about the source of the policy (used to differentiate between employer-sponsored, and individually purchased private health insurance) was also provided by the respondent in the insurance section of the interview.

1. The Individually Purchased PHI SOP flag was set to 3 for all event types, except prescription medicines, which occurred while the sample beneficiary covered by individually purchased private health insurance, based on the beneficiary's health insurance timeline and the date of the event.
2. For prescription medicines, the Individually Purchased PHI SOP flag was set to 3 if the respondent reported that the individually purchased PHI plan covered drugs. If the respondent said the plan did not cover drugs, but reported a specific amount the plan paid for another prescription medicine, the Individually Purchased PHI SOP flag was set to 4 for all prescription medicines reported in the same round.
3. If the event date was missing or ambiguous, and the sample beneficiary's insurance coverage changed during the round, the Individually Purchased PHI SOP flag was set to 4 instead of 3 where applicable.

C.3.4.6 SOP Out-of-pocket and SOP uncollected liability

The out-of-pocket and uncollected liability flags were not set based on health insurance time lines. In many cases, these two categories could not be ruled out as payers based on the health insurance timeline, or even after the claims match.

C.3.4.7 SOP Other public insurance

1. For all events except prescription medicines, the Other Public SOP flag was set to 3 if the respondent reported coverage by "other public insurance".
2. For prescription medicines, the Other Public SOP flag was set to 4 if the SP reported that "other public insurance" paid a known amount for another medicine in the same round.

C.3.4.8 Updating SOP flags using survey-collected cost data

The initial values of the SOP flags were updated when survey-collected cost data provided more definitive information. If the respondent reported the amount the payer paid, the appropriate SOP flag was set to 1. If the respondent did not know how much the payer paid, the SOP flag was set to 2.

C.3.4.9 Updating SOP flags based upon matching Medicare claims data

The initial values of the SOP flags were also updated when the utilization could be linked to Medicare claims records.

The Medicare payment amount and the Medicare SOP flag were updated if the survey-reported utilization matched Medicare claims data, or if the Medicare claims data provided the only record of the utilization. If the Medicare claims record showed a positive, non-zero Medicare payment, the Medicare SOP flag was set to 1, to show that the payment amount was known and would not have to be imputed. If the claims record showed that the sample beneficiary's Medicare benefits were exhausted, the Medicare SOP flag was set to 1, and the Medicare payment amount was set to \$0.00. If the claims record indicated that the service was not a Medicare covered service or that the beneficiary did not have Medicare coverage for the service, both the Medicare payment amount and the Medicare SOP flag were set to zero.

If the claims record showed that Medicare was a secondary payer, the appropriate SOP flag for the primary payer was set to 1 (identifying the insurer as the primary payer), and the Medicare claim was used to develop the amount paid by the private insurer.

C.3.4.10 Updating SOP flags based on unmatched "survey only" utilization

The Medicare SOP flag was set to zero for all unmatched survey events unless the Medicare SOP flag already had a value of 1 or 2.

C.3.4.11 Resolving Conflict between Person Level Survey Reported Health Insurance information and Event Specific Survey Reported Source of Payment Data

For a very limited number of events (less than .5%) the reported source of payment data conflicted with the individuals' reported health insurance information. In these situations, we forced the payment data to conform to the health insurance data for the following payers: Medicaid, Employer Sponsored Health Insurance, VA, HMO coverage, and Medigap insurance. Since Out-of-pocket and Uncollected Liability are always potential payers there were no inconsistencies for these payer categories. Inconsistencies in Medicare SOP data were not resolved, but unmatched survey reported events with Medicare payment and no Medicare Advantage payment were excluded from the payment summaries' adjusted totals.

C.4 Changes Beginning with 2013 Cost and Use Accounting for Sequestration

For historical reference, please refer to the following changes noted in the 2013 data year.

Mandatory Payment Reductions in the Medicare Fee-for-Service (FFS) Program, Sequestration, took effect in 2013. Additional details can be found at: <https://www.cms.gov/outreach-and-education/outreach/ffsprovpartprog/downloads/2013-03-08-standalone.pdf>.

Medicare FFS claims records will show the reduction, which is reflected in the Medicare payment amount. The Prescription Drug Event (PDE) claims do not have sequestration amounts on them. The reduction was taken off of the capitated payments to the providers and will not be reflected in the PDE claim records.