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Improving National Health Survey Data about Asians & Pacific Islanders

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Role of Nationally Representative Surveys

- Federal govt and others already invest in large survey series:
 - Current Population Survey (CPS)
 - National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)
 - Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS)
 - Numerous CDC, NIH and foundation-funded surveys
- Key sources of data about insurance, health care use, health behaviors, health status, etc.

Pros and Cons of National Surveys

- Data widely used. “Known” data quality. Major costs already covered.
- Usually based on self-reported interviews, no or little clinical data
- Can compare APIs vs. other groups
- Standardized questions
- May be hard to change ongoing surveys
- Hard to get detail on issues of importance to sub-populations

Key Issues for API Popn

- Data Content
 - National origin: ancestry or country of birth
 - Immigration status: foreign-born, citizen, etc.
 - Language/English proficiency
- Survey Design
 - Oversample APIs
 - Interview in Asian languages

Comparison of Key Surveys

	CPS	NHIS	MEPS	CHIS
National origin	x	x		x
Immig. status	x	partial	partial	x
Language proficiency	x	partial	partial	x
Oversample APIs		x	?	x
Interview in Asian languages				x

Key Demographic Questions for API Popn

- Determination of race
- National origin: ancestry or country of birth
- Immigration status
 - US born, naturalized citizen, noncitizen (LPR, refugee, temporary legal, undocumented)
 - 1st, 2nd, etc. generation?
- Acculturation or years in U.S.
- English proficiency (spoken, written, linguistic isolation)
- Education in US or abroad

Survey Design Issues

- Limited sample sizes
 - Asian subgroups may be quite diverse
 - Can increase sample size by oversampling, pooling years of data or both
- Language of interviews
 - Administer in multiple languages? Which?
 - Do questions translate consistently across cultures?

Approximate API Sample Sizes

Survey	Sample Size	Effective Sample Size
CPS*	4,555	3,037
NHIS*	3,284	2,433
MEPS	750	357
American Comm Survey	316,000	316,000

Source: Waksberg, et al. for ASPE 2000. Sample sizes are prior to enhancements to NHIS and March CPS

Oversampling

- Often oversample African-Americans & Hispanics.
- More oversampling may be needed for APIs. Fewer. Often more similar to whites.
- Alternative: pool multiple years of data.
- Oversampling can dramatically increase screening and total survey costs
- But screening data *could* be shared across surveys to reduce costs
- Can also reduce costs by targeting high Asian areas, but may create biases

Multiple Interview Languages

- Which languages?
- Equivalency across languages
- Makes questionnaire development more difficult, especially if using CAPI or CATI
- Makes survey operations more complex.
- # interviews in Asian languages may be small, but may be preferred by large percentage of Asian respondents.
- Ability to survey linguistically isolated and to communicate clearly.

Issues and Questions

- Adding questions may be less expensive than survey design changes.
- Oversampling:
 - Tradeoffs of oversampling vs. pooling multiple years of survey to boost sample size
 - Impact of targeting high Asian areas?
- Multiple languages:
 - What is the impact on findings?
 - How to assess adequacy of interpretation?
- Are there sufficient constituencies in research or policy community?