



# National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey Health Center Component

Division of Health Care Statistics  
National Center for Health Statistics

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA),  
Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC) Webinar

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**NAMCS**<sup>TM</sup>  
National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey

# National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS): History & Background

**Goal:** Meet the need for objective, reliable information about access and use of ambulatory medical care services in the United States

## NAMCS milestones:

- **1973:** NAMCS was established and began collecting visit data from non-federal office-based physicians
- **2006:** NAMCS began collecting visit data from community health centers
- **2012:** NAMCS released separate files for visits to non-federal office-based physicians and visits to community health centers
- **2021:** NAMCS modernized its data collection by leveraging EHRs and broadening its focus by collecting data from health care providers as well as physicians
  - Movement toward **two separate NAMCS components:**
    - Provider component
    - **Health center component**

# Health Center Component: Current Sample Design & Methods



- **Sample:** Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and FQHC look-alikes as classified by the Health Resources and Services Administration throughout the 50 U.S. states and Washington, D.C.
- **Mode:** EHR data transmitted to NCHS according to Implementation Guide (IG)
- **Data collection:** January–December annually
- **Sample size and year:** 50 health centers in 2021, 50–100 health centers in 2022, 50–150 health centers in 2023, and 50–200 health centers in 2024
- **Linkage capability:** Collect personally identifiable information, which allows linkage to the National Death Index, HUD, and Medicaid data

# NAMCS Health Center Component: Data Collection



## Initial contact

- Make phone calls to reach health center
- Explain the process to participate
- Gain agreement to participate

## Facility interview

- Schedule interview with a knowledgeable health center staff member
- Complete ~45-minute Computer Assisted Telephone Interview
  - *In 2023, this was moved to a self-administered web survey*

## Testing & validation

- Identify staff with the skills needed to assist
- Contact EHR vendor
- NCHS, health center staff, and vendor coordinate implementation of the IG
- Iterative submission(s) of T&V data to ensure passable delivery
- Pay one-time set-up fee of up to \$5,000

## Production data

- Coordinate submission of production data with health center staff and NCHS
  - Multiple XML data submissions (based on data delivery sizes)
- Pay second payment of up to \$5,000

# NAMCS Health Center Component: Visit Data Elements

- Patient personally identifiable information
- Patient's age and sex
- Patient's race and ethnicity
- Patient's marital status
- Encounter dates
- Encounter start and end times
- Diagnoses and procedures
- Lab tests and results
- Medications
- Clinical notes
- Pregnancy flag

# Restricted and Public Use Data Files: Availability



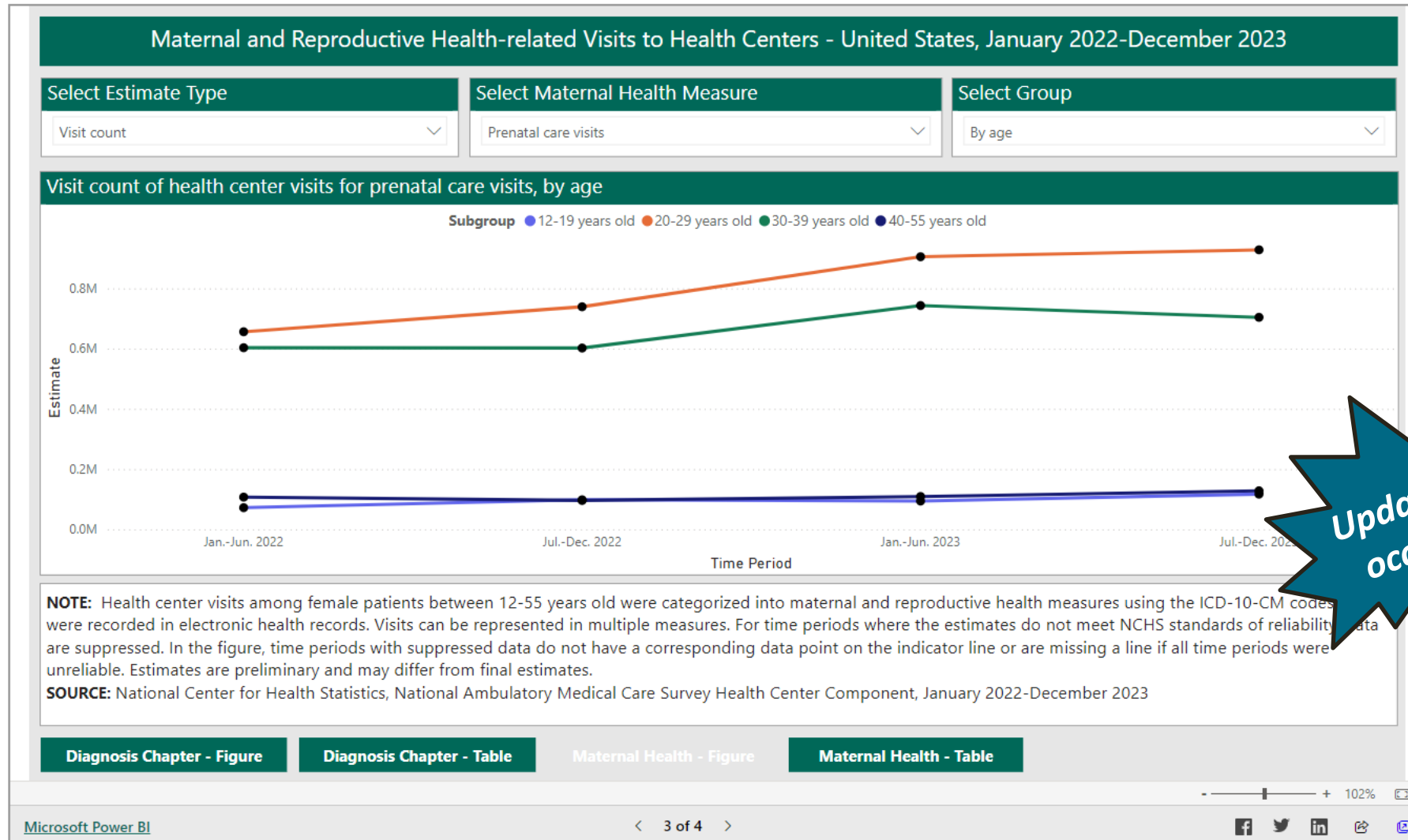
## ■ 2021 NAMCS Health Center Component

- Restricted data file available in the Research Data Center (RDC)
  - 3.5 million visits

## ■ 2022 NAMCS Health Center Component

- Restricted data file available in the RDC
  - 5.6 million visits
- Public-use data file available on the NAMCS website
  - Public use file is a “5% sample” of the complete data file (282,017 visits)
  - Weights designed to allow for national estimates from the public-use file

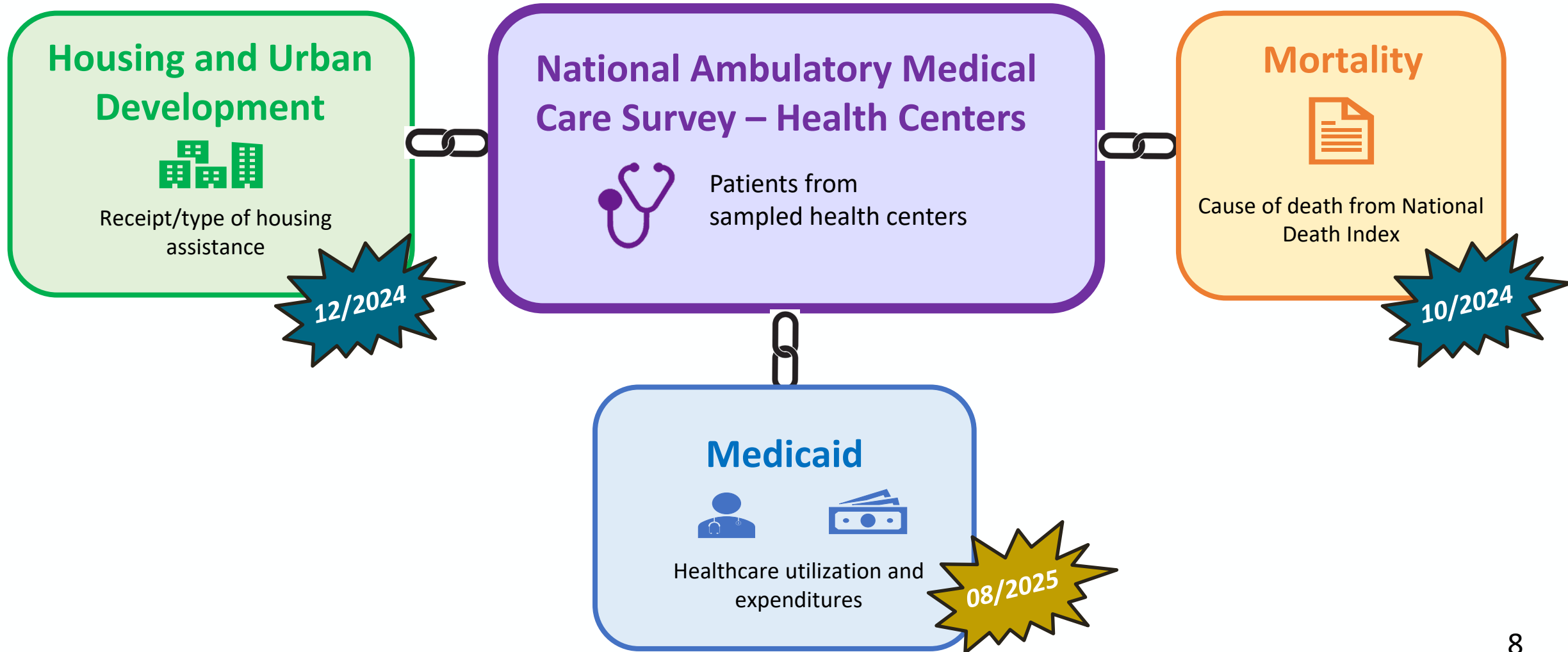
# Preliminary Estimates for Health Center Visits: Dashboard Example



Updates still occurring!

For more on the dashboard: [www.cdc.gov/nchs/dhcs/prelim-hc-visits/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/dhcs/prelim-hc-visits/index.htm)

# Linkage to NAMCS Health Center Data: Current and Forthcoming





# What to Expect for the NAMCS Health Center Component

- **Data collection**
  - 2024 data collection currently in progress
  - Planning underway for 2025 data collection
- **Data files**
  - 2023 restricted and public-use files expected in early 2025
  - Explore the release of additional data elements to restricted and public-use files
    - Vitals
    - Lab Tests
    - Medications
  - Use National Language Processing and Machine Learning techniques to explore unstructured clinical notes data
- **Preliminary estimates**
  - January–June 2024 estimates planned for release in December 2024 or January 2025
  - Topical modules are currently under development (e.g., respiratory and mental health)

# NAMCS Health Center Component Resources

- Public use data files:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/namcs/documentation/about-the-data-2022.html>

- Preliminary estimates dashboard:

[www.cdc.gov/nchs/dhcs/prelim-hc-visits/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/dhcs/prelim-hc-visits/index.htm)

- Restricted data files and linked data:

[www.cdc.gov/rdc/b1datatype/Dt1224a.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/rdc/b1datatype/Dt1224a.htm)

- NCHS Research Data Center:

[www.cdc.gov/rdc/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/rdc/index.htm)

- NAMCS Health Center Component Participant Website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/namcs-health-center/about/index.html>

# Contact Us

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