



# User's Guide: Resources - Secondary Data Analysis of Specific Topics and Datasets

## Resources for specific topics

A number of articles have been written about the use of secondary data analysis for evaluation of specific diseases, care settings, clinical outcomes, sociodemographic disparities, and so forth. These can be highly useful in guiding new research projects.

Some examples are shown below. You may also do your own Medline search. The following search string can be cut and pasted into the PubMed browser to assist in this search, although we recommend trying a variety of other search strategies as well that are tailored to your situation.

("Secondary data"[ti] OR "Administrative data"[ti] OR "datasets"[ti] OR "data sets"[ti] OR "databases"[ti] OR "data bases"[ti]) AND INSERT YOUR SEARCH TERM HERE

## Examples of resources for specific topics

Specific types of services

[The use of federal and state databases to conduct health services research related to physical and occupational therapy.](#)

Freburger JK, Konrad TR.

Arch Phys Med Rehabil. 2002 Jun;83(6):837-45.

Specific diseases and conditions

[Observational research databases in renal disease.](#)

Shlipak M, Stehman-Breen C.

J Am Soc Nephrol. 2005 Dec;16(12):3477-84.

Specific clinical settings

[Health services research in critical care using administrative data.](#)

Wunsch H, Harrison DA, Rowan K.

J Crit Care. 2005 Sep;20(3):264-9..

Specific types of subjects



[Issues to consider when choosing and using large national databases for research of families.](#)

Moriarty HJ, Deatrick JA, Mahon MM, Feetham SL, Carroll RM, Shepard MP, Orsi AJ.  
West J Nurs Res. 1999 Apr;21(2):143-53.

## **Resources for Specific Datasets**

The best sources of information on specific datasets are typically the online documentation, the help desk, and one's colleagues. However, other valuable information can be found in journal articles. First, articles have been written that review key issues in analyzing specific datasets, and may provide highly useful information on the validity and use of certain variables, strategies in merging datasets, and so forth. Some examples are provided below. Second, it can be useful to consult prior research studies that used a dataset of interest to learn how other researchers have addressed specific analytic issues – for example, how they defined exclusion criteria for their cohort, coded certain variables, and so forth.

## **Examples of resources for specific datasets**

[Design strategies and innovations in the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey.](#)

Cohen SB.  
Med Care 2003; 41(suppl):III-5-III-12.

[Overview of the SEER-Medicare data: content, research applications, and generalizability to the United States elderly population.](#)

Warren JL, Klabunde CN, Schrag D, Bach PB, Riley GF.  
Med Care 2002; 40(suppl):IV-3-IV-18.

[Linking physician characteristics and Medicare claims data: issues in data availability, quality, and measurement.](#)

Baldwin LM, Adamache W, Klabunde CN, Kenward K, Dahlman C, Warren JL.  
Med Care 2002; 40(suppl):IV-82-IV-95.

[Secondary databases and their use in outcomes research: a review of the Area Resource File and the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project.](#)

Best AE.  
J Med Systems 1999; 23:175-181.

[References care of John Ayanian]