



Cooperative Agreement Corner



Our Cooperative Agreement with the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) supports activities for jurisdictions. Upcoming opportunities are provided below.

VSCP Directors Webinar

The VSCP Project Directors Webinar occurs on the second Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. ET. You can forward this invitation to others in your office who might be interested. However, you cannot forward your approved registration, as each attendee must register separately. [Register Here](#) to join the webinar on August 12, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET.

You Asked, We Listened: Statistics & Data Innovation Workshop

We have heard your requests for more statistics topics, and we're excited to bring back an in-person opportunity focused on vital statistics and data innovation. Join NAPHSIS and NCHS in **Virginia Beach, August 24–26**, to explore data innovation, discuss vital records statistics projects, share best practices, and discover new approaches to improving data quality and modernizing vital statistics programs. **Registration is free**, but space is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. [Register today](#).

NAPHSIS Special Interest Groups

NAPHSIS Special Interest Groups offer regular opportunities for members to connect with peers, share best practices, and collaborate on topics related to field services, systems, data quality, and public

health statistics. Getting involved is easy. Email hq@naphsis.org to join these groups.

Special Interest Groups and Meeting Schedules

- The [Field Services Special Interest Group](#) meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. ET.
- The [Systems Special Interest Group](#) meets on the last Thursday of each month at 3:00 p.m. ET.
- The [Statistics Special Interest Group](#) meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 2:00 p.m. ET.

Grow Your Leadership Skills with the NAPHSIS Leadership Academy

We're excited to launch the first-ever NAPHSIS Leadership Academy, created to support the professional development of current and emerging leaders in the vital records community. Through interactive learning, peer collaboration, and practical leadership training, participants will gain the skills and confidence needed to lead effectively. [Learn more and apply today](#).

[The Vital Statistics Modernization Community of Practice](#)



July Updates from the NVSS Modernization Community of Practice

This month, the NVSS Modernization Community of Practice (CoP) highlights the continued growth of FHIR awareness, adoption, and innovation across the vital records community. FHIR and modernization were visible themes during the 2026 NAPHSIS Annual Meeting, held June 29–July 1, where jurisdictions, NCHS, NAPHSIS, and industry partners discussed practical progress, emerging use cases, and

opportunities to strengthen vital records data exchange.

Several sessions and discussions demonstrated how jurisdictions and partners are moving toward more mature and creative uses of modern interoperability tools. Idaho presented an overview of its mortality workflows using FHIR, sharing how FHIR-based exchange fits into operational vital records processes. Michigan presented on a pilot project using a SMART-on-FHIR application to receive birth data from hospitals, highlighting the potential for FHIR to support workflows beyond mortality reporting to NCHS. NAPHSIS and RuvoS also previewed upcoming STEVE enhancements designed to give jurisdictions better visibility and tracking of FHIR messages within STEVE.

The NAPHSIS Annual Meeting also included a FHIR and Modernization roundtable, where jurisdictions, NCHS, and industry partners came together to discuss implementation experiences, current challenges, and future opportunities. These conversations reflected a broader shift across the community: FHIR is increasingly becoming part of how vital records offices, federal partners, vendors, and other stakeholders think about data exchange, workflow modernization, and long-term system improvement.

This momentum is encouraging. As more jurisdictions gain experience with FHIR, the community is identifying new ways to use modern standards to improve vital records workflows, strengthen data quality, and support more timely and flexible information exchange. The CoP will continue to provide space for these conversations, including opportunities for jurisdictions to share lessons learned, demonstrate workflows, and discuss practical implementation questions with peers.

We welcome jurisdiction stories, lessons learned, and implementation experiences to share with the broader community. If your jurisdiction has a modernization story or practical experience that may benefit others, please [contact the CoP team](#).

NCHS-Organized Testing Events

NCHS will continue hosting quarterly testing events in 2026. The remaining scheduled testing events are:

- September 14–15
- December 7–8

The invitation for the September testing event will be distributed soon. Jurisdictions are encouraged to

consider whether they are ready to participate as testers or observers. These events provide an opportunity to test mortality, natality, and fetal death workflows; validate system functionality; identify implementation issues; and prepare for future pre-certification, certification, or production activities.

Stay Connected: CoP Recurring Events

The CoP offers several recurring opportunities for engagement, discussion, and technical support:

- CoP Main Meeting – Held monthly on the third Wednesday at 3:00 PM ET.
- Technical Subgroup Meeting – Held monthly on the fourth Wednesday at 1:00 PM ET.
- Optional Weekly Office Hours – Held Tuesdays at 4:00 PM ET.

These sessions provide forums for modernization updates, technical discussion, implementation support, and peer learning across the vital records community.

Technical Support and Collaboration

For technical questions or issues, jurisdictions and partners are encouraged to use the NVSS Modernization Zulip channels:

- Death on
FHIR: <https://chat.fhir.org/#narrow/channel/179301-Death-on-FHIR>
- Birth and Fetal Death on
FHIR: <https://chat.fhir.org/#narrow/channel/434619-Birth-and-Fetal-Death-on-FHIR>

Jurisdictions can access meeting materials, recordings, testing resources, and guidance documents through the [NVSS Modernization CoP SharePoint site](#). For general questions, SharePoint access, meeting invitations, or additional support, contact the CoP team at NVSSModernization@cdc.gov.

Collaborating Office of Medical Examiners and Coroners (COMEC)



[COMEC](#) works to strengthen ties between medical examiners and coroners (MEC) and public health, serve as a resource for medicolegal death investigation (MDI) offices, and assist public health researchers and practitioners in engaging with MECs. If you would like to receive COMEC's monthly email updates and an

invitation to the seminar series, please email MDI@CDC.gov.

MEC as part of public health:

ASTHO, the CDC Foundation, and COMEC recently published an article in the Journal of Public Health Management and Practice examining data infrastructure in medical examiner and coroner (MEC) offices and the impact of the MDI Connect initiative. The initiative looks to strengthen standards-based data sharing in MEC offices to deliver more timely mortality data and better equip public health agencies to detect and respond to emerging trends. Read more about the critical work MDI Connect is doing in the [JPHMP article](#).

Upcoming COMEC Virtual Seminars

The Seminar Series is designed for MEC, MDIs, medical certifiers, and related partners. In 2026 COMEC will have 6 seminars on the second Tuesday every other month and have ABMDI education credits available.

Title: Applied Forensic Epidemiologist Approaches to Heat-Related Deaths

Presenters: Natasha Tully, Pima County Medical Examiner's Office, Kimberly Repp, PhD, MPH, Washington County Medical, and Abigail Grande, MPH, Michigan State University

When: 8/11/2026 at 3:00-4:00 pm ET.

Title: Medicolegal Support for Human Spaceflight Contingency Planning and Mishap Recovery Operations

Presenter: Katherine A Grosso, MA, D-ABDMI, Armed Forces Medical Examiner System

When: 10/13/2026 at 3:00-4:00 pm ET.

Notable Publications/Data Briefs

Puerto Rico Mortality data at CDC WONDER

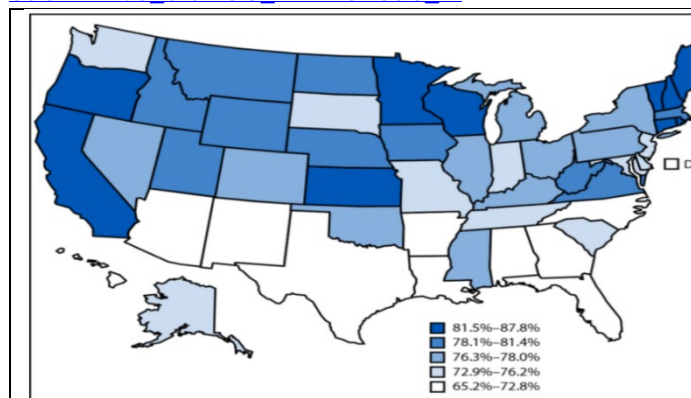
Provisional mortality statistics for deaths since 2020 are now available for Puerto Rico on CDC WONDER at [Provisional Mortality Statistics](#). This development enables stakeholders, analysts, scholars, students, and others interested in PR mortality data to utilize CDC WONDER's capabilities. They can now access information such as the number of deaths, leading causes of deaths, crude rates, and age-adjusted rates to

standard populations (WHO and US) based on selected attributes. This marks a major step forward in the data modernization initiative for the US territories and enhances the use of mortality data to support more effective public health efforts for residents of the archipelago.

Percentage of Births in Which Women Received Prenatal Care in the First Trimester of Pregnancy, by State — United States, 2024

This report was released on July 2, 2026, and can be found at

https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/75/wr/mm7525a3.htm?s_cid=OS_mm7525a3_w.



Findings from this report show that for births in the United States in 2024, a notable percentage of expectant mothers accessed prenatal care early in their pregnancies. According to the findings, 75.5% of births involved mothers who began receiving prenatal care during the first trimester. In addition, there was significant variation among states in the proportion of early prenatal care. Florida reported the lowest rate, with 65.2% of mothers starting prenatal care in the first trimester, while Vermont had the highest rate at 87.8%.

Vital Staff Spotlights

Jurisdictions may add as many names as they would like to our NCHS Newsletter mailing list! Just send a note to George Tolson at gct1@cdc.gov.

[Click here for previous newsletter issues](#)