

Vital Statistics Advisory Committee (VSAC)  
Vital Records Protection Advisory Committee (VRPAC)  
Joint Meeting  
Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, March 3, 2010  
9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

**Attendees**

**Convener:** Linette Scott

**Committee Members:**

**Present:** Debbie Williams

**Phone:** Peter Abbott, Krista Hanni, Sue Holtby, Erlinda Valdez

**CDPH Staff:**

**Present:** Linette Scott, Debbie McDowell (Debbie M.), David Fisher, Julie Turner, Cindy Tanaka-Fong, Karen Vinson

**Phone:** None

**A. WELCOME**

Linette welcomed all attendees. Debbie M. instructed committee members to e-mail any changes to their contact information to her.

**B. Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

Erlinda states the previous meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM not 12:00 AM. The minutes will be approved with the time correction.

**C. Old business**

None

**D. New business**

Debbie M. stated that an e-mail was received from Jonathan Teague with his approval for the 6 projects that will be discussed at the March 3, 2010 meeting.

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**Project Title:** "Mortality among Released Juvenile Offenders in California"

**Principle Investigator(s):** Hans Steiner

**Project Type:** New Research Project

**CPHS Approval:** Requested - **Project No.:** Pending - **Expiration:** Pending

**File(s) Requested:** 1989-2006 Death Statistical Master File, 1997-2006 Multiple Cause of Death File

**Requested Identifiers:** Personal Identifiers

**Personal Contact:** No

**Identifiers Released:** No

**History:** None

**Summary:** The proposed study will begin to examine mortality rates among approximately 20,000 juvenile offenders released from the California Division of Juvenile Justice between 1997 and 2006. Specific aims include: 1) to examine

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mortality rates among youth released from the California Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) compared to age-matched controls, 2) to identify socio-demographic and certain mental health risk factors for death among released juvenile offenders and 3) to describe the most common causes of mortality in this group upon re-entry into society.

These data will be used to identify former juvenile offenders in California who have died since release from detention and to determine mortality rates, primary risk factors, and main causes of death for this population of youth. Data will be sent directly to the CDCR Division of Juvenile Justice for matching and subsequent de-identification. Stanford investigators will only have access to de-identified data for analyses.

**VSAC Discussion:** There was no discussion needed.

**VSAC Decision:** Approved

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**Project Title:** "Effects of Neighborhood Cultural Context on Infant Mortality and Birth Weight in Los Angeles County"

**Principle Investigator(s):** Lisa Ross DeCamp, MD, MSPH

**Project Type:** New Research Project

**CPHS Approval:** Approved - **Project No.:** 09-08-57 - **Expiration:** 12-03-2010

**File(s) Requested:** 2000-2001 Birth Statistical Master File

**Requested Identifiers:** Personal identifiers

**Personal Contact:** No

**Identifiers Released:** No

**History:** None

**Summary:** In this study, determinants of infant mortality and birth weight will be investigated using multi-level regression. Information gained will allow for novel approaches to prevention or treatment.

The substantive focus of this research is to better understand determinants of the epidemiologic paradox in infant mortality and birth weight. The term epidemiologic paradox refers to situations where the morbidity or mortality of a certain group is at odds with what is expected given the socioeconomic profile of the group. In particular, the effect of neighborhood cultural context on infant mortality and birth weight will be examined.

The first part of the study will examine the relatively rare event of infant mortality and will take a broad view of the neighborhood context. The study plans to link birth weight with data from the Los Angeles Family and Neighborhood Survey (LA FANS) which has extensive information on neighborhood characteristics of 65 representative

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neighborhoods in Los Angeles, including characteristics such as social support and collective efficacy. The study plans to use birth weight as the outcome variable for this part of the analysis and analyze data from the years 2000–2006. In this portion of the study, the association between birth weights of measures of cultural context, social interactions, and neighborhood personal and physical resources will be examined.

The study will make several contributions: First, it will enhance our understanding of the determinants of infant mortality and birth weight and the factors that account for disparities in infant mortality and birth weight by socioeconomic status and race/ethnicity. Second, it will highlight the community cultural context as a possible explanation for Latino health paradoxes. Third, it will enhance our understanding of the determinants of birth weight in the context of social support and collective efficacy of a community.

**VSAC Discussion:** Krista wished the protocol went into more details on their geocoding methods but had no issues with approving the project. Sue thought this project is a good example of combining vital statistics with survey data.

**VSAC Decision:** Approved

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**Project Title:** "Estimating the Effectiveness of Monovalent novel H1N1 (nH1N1) Vaccine in Preventing RT-PCR-confirmed Influenza Hospitalization"

**Principle Investigator(s):** Pamala Daily Kirley on behalf of Gretchen Rothrock, MPH

**Project Type:** New Research

**CPHS Approval:** Approved - **Project No.:** 09-10-07 - **Expiration:** 10-01-2010

**File(s) Requested:** 2008 Birth Statistical Master File, 2008 Death Statistical Master File

**Requested Identifiers:** Personal Identifiers

**Personal Contact:** Yes

**Identifiers Released:** No

**History:** No

**Summary:** Primary objective is to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the monovalent nH1N1 vaccine among persons >7 month of age, in preventing hospitalization with a RT-PCR-confirmed nH1N1 influenza virus infection in participating EIP sites. Secondary objectives: (1) Make age-specific estimates of vaccine effectiveness for the monovalent nH1N1 vaccine in preventing nH1N1 hospitalizations for the following age groups: 7–59 months; 5–17 years; 18–49 years; 50+ years. (2) Determine if clinical vaccine effectiveness differs for receipt of one vs. two doses of monovalent nH1N1 vaccine among those recommended to receive two doses of vaccine. (3) Evaluate potential for effect modification of vaccination by the presence of chronic medical conditions.

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The current study will be conducted under the Respiratory Disease Activity (RDA) of the Emerging Infections Program (EIP) Network of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC), by building upon the existing surveillance system for laboratory-confirmed influenza hospitalizations.

The evaluation period for nH1N1 VE will begin at the time when vaccine is distributed and implemented in the counties under surveillance. This time frame may be different across counties. Additionally, cases will only be enrolled if any persons in that age group are targeted for receipt of vaccine. The end of surveillance for nH1N1 will be determined as the pandemic progresses.

**VSAC Discussion:** H1N1 emerged in 2009. There was some discussion regarding the request for 2008 data instead of 2009. It's possible that the 2008 data will be used as a baseline and other years will be requested in the future.

**VSAC Decision:** Approved

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**Project Title:** "Processing in Early Language Learning"

**Principle Investigator(s):** Katharine Graf Estes

**Project Type:** Continuing Research Project

**CPHS Approval:** Approved - **Project No.:** 08-02-02 - **Expiration:** 02-04-2011

**File(s) Requested:** AD Hoc Birth Data File

**Requested Identifiers:** Name, Certificate, Social Security Numbers

**Personal Contact:** Yes

**Identifiers Released:** No

**History:** Previous Data Request

**Summary:** This project will investigate how infants learn from regularities in the language they hear and the nature of what they learn. Additionally, this project will examine the nature of the learning mechanisms that infants possess. The specific goals include: (1) Testing infants' pattern-tracking skills by testing infants' processing of speech, non-speech auditory patterns and visual patterns; (2) Test how prior experience with sound sequences affects the ability to learn new words and examine how gaining experience with words affects the nature of infants' lexical representations; and (3) Examine the relation between infants' vocabulary size and performance lab tasks that tap important skills for language learning. Several inter-related experiments such as preferential listening, looking-while-listening, and parental report of vocabulary size will be used to analyze the goals. Infants may be involved in one or more of the experiments depending on their availability. At the start of each experimental session, the participant's parent or legal guardian will review the project's consent form. The researcher will discuss the consent form and answer any questions before securing any signatures. Each experiment lasts approximately 5 to

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45 minutes. This research will contribute to understanding of language development and how children learn.

**VSAC Comments:** This is a continuing research project which has not been reviewed by this committee. All continuing research projects will be reviewed and approved by this committee. After approval, all subsequent reviews will be performed by the Vital Statistics Section.

**VSAC Decision:** Approved.

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**Project Title:** "Naming Practices among California Parents"

**Principle Investigator(s):** Hannah Emery

**Project Type:** Continuing Research Project

**CPHS Approval:** Approved - **Project No.:** 09-08-51 - **Expiration:** 08-10-2010

**File(s) Requested:** 2007 Birth Statistical Master File

**Requested Identifiers:** Personal Identifiers

**Personal Contact:** No

**Identifiers Released:** Yes

**History:** Previous Data Request

**Summary:** The goal of this project is to conduct a qualitative study of the process which parents chose a name for their child and compare naming practices across families with different racial, educational, and economic backgrounds.

To show a broad range of naming trends, data from the 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2008 birth statistical master files will be used. The identifiers requested are: children and parents names, parent's age at child's birth, parent's race and years of education, mother's birthplace and mother's residential zip code. These variables will be used to examine naming patterns across race, education level, foreign-born versus native-born and economic background (which will be obtained through a correlation of zip codes with contemporary census data to obtain a sense of the economic standing of various regions).

Data analysis will involve manipulation of some small-cell data sets. Using first names as the unit of analysis means that there will be some names that are associated with only a small number or one family. Special care will be taken when discussing any unusual names. If a name does not appear in the list of the top 1000 names for that year, it will be discussed only in the abstract, as part of an aggregate group of unusual names that might be analyzed in terms of the parents' racial, educational and zip code demographics. All efforts will be made to avoid identifying individual families in any output stemming from this project.

**VSAC Discussion:** There was no discussion needed.

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**VSAC Decision:** Approved

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**Project Title:** "Establishment of a Statewide System of Linked Perinatal Databases"

**Principle Investigator(s):** Jeffrey B. Gould, MD, MPH

**Project Type:** Continuing Research Project

**CPHS Approval:** Approved - **Project No.:** 06-08-55 - **Expiration:** 08-06-2010

**File(s) Requested:** 2008 Birth Statistical Master File, 2006 Birth Cohort File, 2007 Fetal Death Statistical File

**Requested Identifiers:** Name and Certificate Numbers

**Personal Contact:** No

**Identifiers Released:** No

**History:** Previous Data Request

**Summary:** The primary goal of California Perinatal Quality Care Collaborative is to improve the perinatal health of California's mothers and infants by providing data that can be used to identify specific opportunities for improvement, develop strategic and tactical toolkits to facilitate improvement activities, and conduct educational activities that support these quality improvement initiatives.

The second goal for CPQCC is to serve as a model for other regional Perinatal Quality Improvement efforts.

The CPQCC is creating a timely (release within 12 months of the birth year) California dataset, the California Perinatal Quality Improvement Data Resource, to facilitate statewide hospital and community-based activities to improve perinatal health and outcomes. This resource consists of a High Risk Infant dataset and an All-California Births dataset. The High Risk Infant dataset consists of linked CPQCC clinical infant morbidities data, OSHPD hospital discharge data on maternal and infant length of stay, transfers, rehospitalizations and morbidity, California birth certificate data, and US census neighborhood, socio-demographic, contextual data, geo-coded by maternal residence.

**VSAC Discussion:** This is a continuing research project. Sue said she has worked on a committee with Dr Gould and is familiar with his work.

**VSAC Decision:** Approved.

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## **E. Additional discussion topics**

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- Kaiser Permanente pulled their request for data; therefore there was no discussion of this project.
- **Release of birth files with no personal identifiers:** Jane and Debbie M. and attended a meeting of the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) to discuss statute pertaining to the release of birth files with no personal identifiers. Requests for birth files with no personal identifiers must go through CPHS and VSAC/VRPAC approval.
- **New data products available:** The 2008 death statistical master file is now available.
- **Vacant VSAC/VRPAC Position:** A question was presented to the committee as to how this seat should be filled. Debbie M. indicates she has two applications that were received during the first recruitment period. Statute does not dictate how many members the joint committee should have just the term limits. We do not want the joint committee to be too large to work constructively. Currently we have nine members. Committee members indicated adding two members would not make the group too large. Linette and Debbie M. will review the two applications and advise the committee on their decision.
- **Meeting materials and attendance:** Debbie M. asked committee members to e-mail their recommendations on the research protocols if they are unable to attend a meeting. If you don't receive the meeting agenda, attachments, and research protocols two weeks before a scheduled meeting, please contact Julie Turner or Debbie M.
- **CPHS/VSAC Processes:** Peter Abbott would like to see a flowchart of the process a research protocol goes through for approval from Vital Statistics, CPHS and VSAC. He also suggested that we simplify the process for reviewing and approving projects for which CHS staff have no concerns.
- **Security of data:** Peter Abbott asked if we currently have security standards that dictate how researchers should store the data they receive from Vital Statistics. Linette states we may need a sub-committee to look at this issue. Debbie M. will research and provide information on the procedures we currently have in place. Researchers are required to provide a statement in their research protocol that outlines their security measures they have in place to protective the confidentiality of the data they receive. Debbie Williams indicates she will provide Debbie M. with the security standards that Social Services uses when data is provided to researchers.
- **Destroy or return vital statistics data:** Currently there is no process to insure that researchers have returned or destroyed data at the end of their project. Debbie M. suggested we could add information to the data file application to address this issue or mail a reminder letter to the researcher when their CPHS

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approval expires. Any recommendations will be discussed by the committee before any changes are implemented.

- **Abstracts of research findings:** Krista asked if researchers are required to submit an abstract of their research findings when they complete their project. A portal has been established on CDPH's website for researchers to submit abstracts of their projects for display. It's not a requirement that they do so but we may change that requirement in the future.
- **Application in statute:** Peter Abbott asked if the application for researchers to request Vital Statistics Data set by statute. Debbie M. states that statute outlines what the application should include.
- **VSAC information:** Krista asked if names of researchers and their projects can be discussed at other meetings. All VSAC/VRPAC activities are public information. The public can also attend committee meetings.
- Please e-mail any topics for discussion at upcoming VSAC/VRPAC meetings to Debbie M. or Julie. Currently we have the following topics for discussion:
  - a. Flowchart of VSAC and CPHS process
  - b. Security of data
  - c. Destroying or returning vital statistics data
  - d. Revisions to the data request application
  - e. Vacant VSAC/VRPAC seats

Next meeting: May 5, 2010.