

Appendix A: Detailed Cost Assumptions

Appendix A: Detailed cost Assumptions for Specific Tasks

This section describes each task and the assumptions used to determine the number of hours for each labor category. In this section, we describe the distribution of labor and activities within each task across the key actors. *Table A-1* shows the labor and non-labor detail associated with Tasks 1-5, and *Table A-2* presents detailed cost information for tasks 6-10. In the paragraphs that follow, we discuss the cost assumptions for each specific task. Tables A-1 and A-2 are included as a separate Excel spreadsheet.

Cost estimates were developed using a list of hourly wage rates established by Economic Research Service (ERS) from existing projects for each of our three labor categories and a review of similar projects that HSR has performed of this type. Again, these estimates are for illustrative purposes as the actual number of data elements to be included in a core data set have not yet been determined. USDA may choose to contract out some or all of these activities and take on more or less responsibility for these tasks. A decision to implement these tasks within USDA may require additional “subtasks,” depending on the level of expertise within USDA. Additional assistance may be needed from Department of Health and Human Services agencies, such as staff from the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health. These kinds of additional tasks are not considered “in scope” for purposes of costing this initiative.

Task 1: Conduct Initial Meeting Among Federal Agency Staff

Federal Responsibilities

USDA will coordinate an initial meeting between representatives from the National Center for Health Statistics, The Health Care Financing Administration, and possibly the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health. The purpose of this meeting to agree upon the scope of the initiative, solicit support from the Federal agencies involved, and identify staff to serve on a future steering committee.

Estimated Time Requirements: It is estimated that a one-day meeting would occur involving officials from the above organizations, with a series of follow-up meetings to occur based upon discussions at the first meeting. A total of 60 hours of Senior Management time is allocated for two individuals from USDA to attend the meetings. An additional 80 hours are allocated for three representatives from HHS (one from each agency) to attend the meetings and for USDA staff to prepare briefing materials. Sixteen hours of Research Assistant time is allocated for assisting with preparation of briefing materials, attending the meeting as a note-taker, and preparing a summary report.

A modest amount of local travel funds are included for officials to attend the meetings.

State Responsibilities

None in the Task

Task 2: Conduct Meetings with State Representatives.

Federal Responsibility

This task will require that USDA coordinate a series of meetings with Federal Steering committee members and representatives State programs. It was assumed for budget purposes that five meetings would take place over the project year, and additional conference calls as necessary.

Estimated Time Requirements: The budget allots time for three USDA representatives, two HHS representatives, and four State officials to serve on the steering committee. A total of 80 hours of Senior Manager time has been allocated for attending the five meetings and doing preparation work. Eighty hours of Senior Analyst time has also been allocated for attending meetings and overseeing the preparation of materials. Research analyst time has also been allocated to prepare materials. As was true in Task 1, a modest amount of local travel funds are included. However, it is also assumed that the Federal government will pay for the cost of State representatives to attend the Steering Committee meetings. As a result, a total of \$24,000 has been allocated for State program director travel. This number is based upon an average cost of \$1200 per trip, for four individuals attending five meetings.

State Responsibility

It is assumed that a total of four State representatives will be involved in the initial meeting and on the Steering committee. These will include two WIC program representatives, one Vital Records representative, and one Medicaid program representative. These officials will help to guide the project, provide input on products developed, and present their State-level perspective to the committee.

Estimated Time Requirements: It is estimated that a total of 100 hours Senior Manger and 100 Hours of Senior Analyst time will be devoted to this project. It is unknown if State officials will select program directors, technical staff , or a combination of both to serve on the committee.

Task 3: Develop Sampling Plan

Federal Responsibility

It is assumed that the Federal Government will take the lead in developing the sampling plan.

Estimated Time Requirement: Based upon the amount of time needed to develop sampling plans for similar projects, a total of 20 Senior manager hours, 60 Senior Analyst hours, and 40 Research Analyst hours have been allocated.

State Responsibility

It is assumed that State officials will be provided the opportunity to review the sampling plan and provide comments.

Estimated Time Requirements: A total of 16 hours Senior Manager and 16 hours Senior Analyst time have been allocated for review and comment.

Task 4: Create the Database Structure

Federal Responsibility

The Federal Government will take the lead on providing the staff work for developing the database structure for the initiative, with a review role for State officials. This task involves identifying the basic data elements that will be included in the database. In addition, this task will involve technical staff working to identify the appropriated database software to utilize, developing the structure for the database, and creating consistent data definitions.

Estimated Time Requirements: A total of 32 hours of Senior Manager time is allocated to oversee the process. A total of 200 hours of Senior Analyst time, mostly that of technical staff, is allocated to develop the database. An additional 80 hours of Research Analyst time is allocated to research how States have built their linked databases in the past and to assist with the technical work involved in building the database .

State Responsibility:

A total of 80 hours has been allocated to Senior Management and another 80 hours allocated to Senior Analyst to review and comment on the database structure.

Task 5: Create Data Linkage Protocols.

Federal Responsibility

As was true in Task 4, the Federal Government will take the lead in developing the data linkage protocols. However, USDA staff should be able to take advantage of technology developed by State Agencies who have linked these data sources, and other Federal agencies that have worked with linking Medicaid and Vital Records data.

Estimated Time Requirement: A total of 40 hours of Senior Management time has been allocated to review the protocols, once developed. A total of 120 hours of Senior Analyst and 120 hours of Research Assistant time has been allocated to review prior methodologies and protocols used for linking data, and develop a recommended set of protocols for the steering committee to review.

State Responsibility

In order to take advantage of existing State expertise in this area, a total of 100 hours of Senior Manager and 100 hours of Senior Analyst time has been allotted for State officials to collect and provide information to Federal staff on prior methodologies.

Task 6: Develop Access Protocols and Guidelines for Removing Client Identifying Information.

Federal Responsibility

The Federal Staff will take the lead in this task by developing guidelines for data access that meet the needs of the two Federal Agencies involved. In addition, Federal staff will be responsible for identifying appropriate protocols to allow for a consistent method of eliminating any client identification information from the database.

Estimated Time Requirement: A total of 16 hours of Senior Manager time is allocated to review and approve the protocols. Forty hours of Senior Analyst time is allocated to develop the protocols, and 32 hours of Research Analyst time is allocated to research and resolve technical issues related to requirements that may be unique to one of the three Federal programs.

State Responsibility

States will need to review the protocols that are developed in order to be sure that there are no problems with State regulations regarding client confidentiality. To this end, State associations may play a valuable role in circulating the proposed protocols and soliciting State program director comments.

Estimated Time Requirement: A total of 24 hours Senior Manager time and 24 hours Senior Analyst time is allocated for the State associations to circulate the protocols and collect comments from State agencies.

Task 7: Test Protocols For Data Linkage Integrity and Database Functionality

Federal Responsibility.

This task will require significant cooperation between Federal officials and States who volunteer to test the data linkage protocols. This task is essentially the pilot test of all the materials developed to this point. The Federal government will take the lead in recruiting up to nine States that will test the protocols, and will provide technical assistance to the States to resolve any problems. In addition, once the pilot test is complete, the Federal government staff will be responsible for re-drafting the protocols based upon the experience of the pilot.

In addition to testing the data linkage protocols, Federal officials will also test the database functionality. This will involve developing the query software, loading the data from the pilot sites into the database, and running sample queries and reports. Adjustments will then be made to the database and the query software once this test is complete.

Estimated Time Requirements: It is assumed that a significant amount of time will need to be devoted to testing the database and supporting the State linkage effort. A total of 80 hours of Senior Manager time has been allocated to oversee the testing, identify need resources for technical assistance, and examine the utility of the database. A total of 200 hours of Senior

Analyst and 200 hours of Research Assistant time is allocated to construct the queries, test the database, assess State needs for technical assistance and support, and provide assistance to the nine States.

State Responsibility

The State WIC Program managers, along with their counterparts in Medicaid and vital records, will be taking the lead role in creating the data linkages. It will be their responsibility to put in place data sharing agreements, collect the data from the Medicaid and Vital Records programs, run the linkage protocols, and submit the data to the Federal government.

Estimated Time Requirements: A total of 180 hours of Senior Management (most likely State WIC Director) time is allocated to develop the data sharing agreements and oversee the implementation of the data linkage. A total of 300 hours of Senior Analyst time is devoted to actually collecting the data, implementing the protocols, and running the programs. A total of 120 hours of Research Assistant time is devoted to assisting the Senior Analyst with conducting the tests and troubleshooting programming problems.

Task 8: Revised Protocols Based Upon Test Results

Federal Responsibility

Federal officials will revise the data linkage protocols, the database structure, and the query programs based upon the input from the test States.

Estimated Time Requirements: A total of 40 hours has been allocated to all three labor categories to make the necessary revisions to the protocols, database, and query software.

State Responsibility

State officials will provide input to potential solutions proposed by USDA.

Estimated Time Requirements: A total of 24 hours of Senior Manager and 24 hours of Senior Analyst time has been allocated to review and comment on the revised protocols.

Task 9 Obtain OMB Clearance

Federal Responsibility.

USDA will be responsible for developing and publishing the Federal Register Notice and preparing the OMB clearance package for submission.

Estimated Time Requirements: Based upon agency experience in develop these packages, a total of 24 hours Senior Management review time has been allocated. A total of 40 hours Senior

Analyst and 40 hours Research Assistant time has been allocated to prepare the notice and OMB package.

State Responsibility

None.

Task 10 Implement Initiative on National Level

Federal Responsibility

After OMB clearance is obtained, USDA officials, along with their Federal HHS partners, will implement the sampling plan in the rest of the states. Federal officials will be responsible for providing technical assistance to State officials regarding the implementation of the protocols and use of the database.

Estimated Time Requirements: A total of 40 hours of Senior Management hours have been allocated to oversee the implementation. An additional 500 hours of Senior Analyst time is allocated to provide technical assistance to States needing help in implementing the project. An additional 200 hours of Research Analyst time is allocated to support the technical assistance effort and coordinate State requests for assistance.

State Responsibility

States will assume responsibility for implementing the data sharing agreements and conducting the data linkages. It is assumed that much of the work will have already been accomplished through the testing phase, and the only resource needs State officials will require is initial support in implementing the linkage protocols.

Estimated Time Requirements. An average total of 40 hours of Senior Analyst and 40 hours of Research Assistant time have been allocated to each of the 42 States that will be implementing the data linkages. These hours will be used to support State level efforts to implement the protocols and adjust for unique needs that may occur. It is assumed that some states that have worked with these types of linkages before will not need as many hours, while others may need far more. However, it is the assumption of this initiative that the work conducted in Tasks 4-7 will reduce the amount of work required by the State agencies, as the protocols will have been tested and implemented in up to nine States. This is a significant cost to the States, and would likely need to be supported

Table A-1
Estimates of Task Cost
Data Development Initiative
Creating a National Research Database using WIC, Medicaid, and Vital Records Data
Tasks 1-5

| Federal Costs | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| | | Task One | | Task Two | | Task Three | | Task Four | | Task Five | |
| Labor Categories | Assumed Rates | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars |
| Senior Management | \$111.19 | 60 | \$6,671 | 80 | \$8,895 | 20 | \$2,224 | 32 | \$3,558 | 40 | \$4,448 |
| Senior Analyst | \$65.08 | 80 | \$5,206 | 80 | \$5,206 | 60 | \$3,905 | 200 | \$13,016 | 120 | \$7,810 |
| Research Assistant | \$36.75 | 16 | \$588 | 40 | \$1,470 | 40 | \$1,470 | 80 | \$2,940 | 120 | \$4,410 |
| Total Labor | | 156 | \$12,466 | | \$15,572 | | \$7,599 | | \$19,514 | | \$16,667 |
| Other Direct Costs | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Travel | | | \$40 | | \$24,200 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Software | | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Data Storage | | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Total Other Direct Costs | | | \$40 | | \$24,200 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Total Cost | | | \$12,506 | | \$39,772 | | \$7,599 | | \$19,514 | | \$16,667 |
| State Costs | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Task One | | Task Two | | Task Three | | Task Four | | Task Five | |
| Labor Categories | Assumed Rates | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars |
| Senior Management | \$111.19 | 0 | \$0 | 100 | \$11,119 | 16 | \$1,779 | 0 | \$0 | 100 | \$11,119 |
| Senior Analyst | \$65.08 | 0 | \$0 | 100 | \$6,508 | 16 | \$1,041 | 0 | \$0 | 100 | \$6,508 |
| Research Assistant | \$36.75 | 0 | \$0 | | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 |
| Total Labor | | 0 | \$0 | 200 | \$17,627 | | \$2,820 | | \$0 | | \$17,627 |
| Other Direct Costs | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Travel | | | | | | | \$0 | | | | \$0 |
| Software | | | | | | | \$0 | | | | \$0 |
| Data Storage | | | | | | | \$0 | | | | \$0 |
| Total Other Direct Cost | | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Total Cost | | | \$0 | | \$17,627 | | \$2,820 | | \$0 | | \$17,627 |
| Total Cost- Federal and State | | | \$12,506 | | \$57,399 | | \$10,419 | | \$19,514 | | \$34,294 |

Table A-2
Estimates of Task Cost
Data Development Initiative
Creating a National Research Database using WIC, Medicaid, and Vital Records Data
Tasks 6-10

| Federal Costs | | Task Six | | Task Seven | | Task Eight | | Task Nine | | Task Ten | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Labor Categories | Assumed Rates | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars | Total Hours | Total Dollars |
| Senior Management | \$111.19 | 16 | \$1,779 | 80 | \$8,895 | 40 | \$4,448 | 24 | \$2,669 | 40 | \$4,448 |
| Senior Analyst | \$65.08 | 40 | \$2,603 | 200 | \$13,016 | 40 | \$2,603 | 40 | \$2,603 | 500 | \$32,540 |
| Research Assistant | \$36.75 | 32 | \$1,176 | 200 | \$7,350 | 40 | \$1,470 | 40 | \$1,470 | 200 | \$7,350 |
| Total Labor | | 88 | \$5,558 | | \$29,261 | | \$8,521 | | \$6,742 | | \$44,338 |
| Other Direct Costs | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Travel | | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Software | | | \$0 | | \$2,400 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Data Storage | | | \$0 | | \$1,200 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Total Other Direct Costs | | | \$0 | | \$3,600 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Total Cost | | | \$5,558 | | \$32,861 | | \$8,521 | | \$6,742 | | \$44,338 |
| State Costs | | Task Six | | Task Seven | | Task Eight | | Task Nine | | Task Ten | |
| Labor Categories | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Senior Management | \$111.19 | 24 | \$2,669 | 180 | \$20,014 | 24 | \$2,669 | 0 | \$0 | 40 | \$4,448 |
| Senior Analyst | \$65.08 | 24 | \$1,562 | 300 | \$19,524 | 24 | \$1,562 | 0 | \$0 | 1680 | \$109,334 |
| Research Assistant | \$36.75 | 0 | \$0 | 120 | \$4,410 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 1680 | \$61,740 |
| Total Labor | | 48 | \$4,230 | 600 | \$43,948 | | \$4,230 | | \$0 | | \$175,522 |
| Other Direct Costs | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Travel | | | 0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Software | | | 0 | | \$4,500 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Data Storage | | | 0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Total Other Direct Cost | | | \$0 | | \$4,500 | | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Total Cost | | | \$4,230 | | \$48,448 | | \$4,230 | | \$0 | | \$175,522 |
| Total Cost- Federal and State | | | \$9,789 | | \$81,309 | | \$12,751 | | \$6,742 | | \$219,860 |