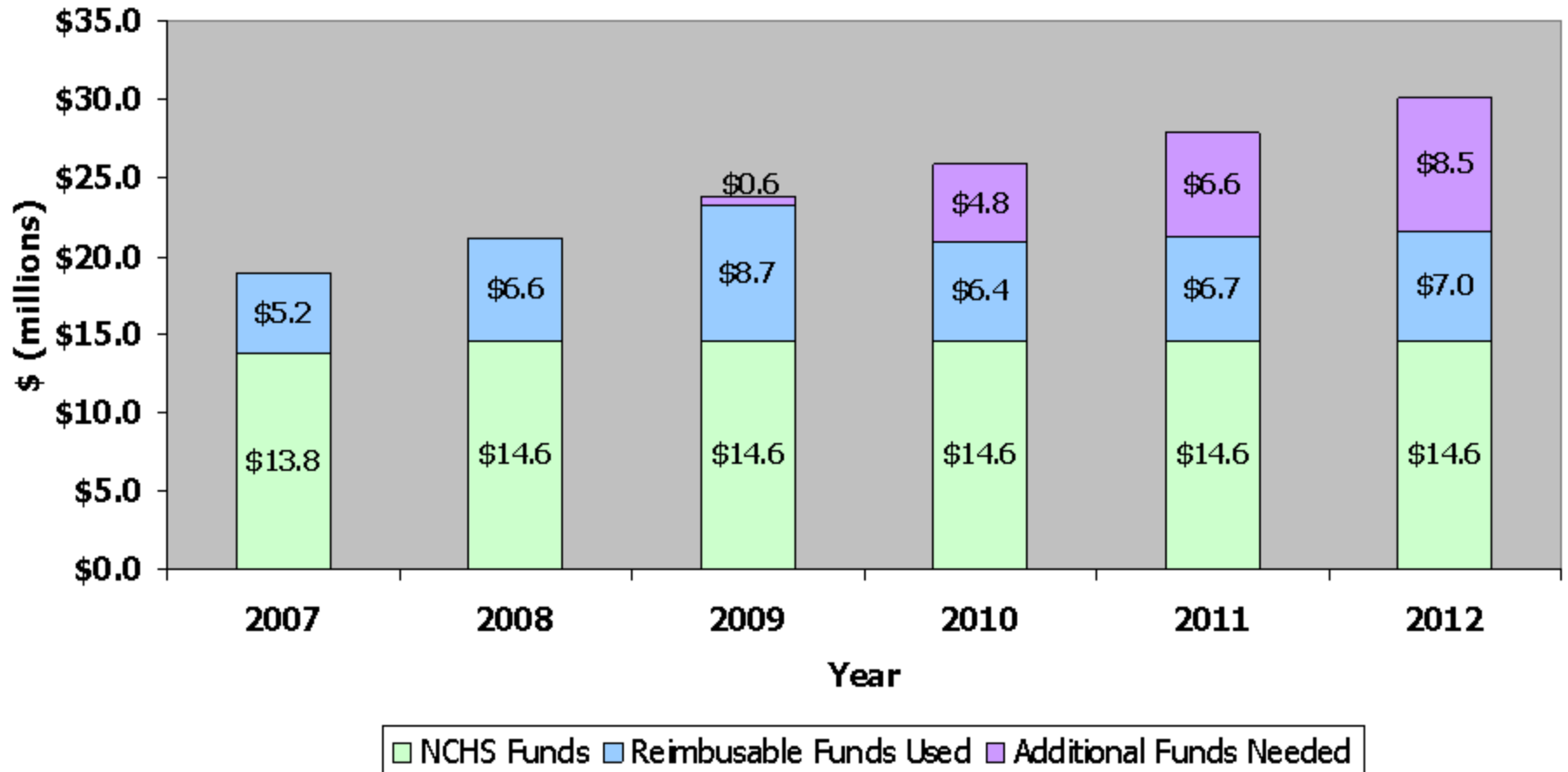


# National Health Interview Survey Program

**Budget update/options/issues  
2007-2012 and beyond**

**Presentation by Jane F. Gentleman, Director  
Division of Health Interview Statistics, NCHS  
to NCHS Board of Scientific Counselors  
April 24, 2008**

# Sources of Funding for NHIS Expenses, 2007-2012



*Notes:* Assumes flat funding  $\geq 2008$ . Assumes reimbursables increase by 5% per year  $\geq 2008$ . Includes Census and other costs; excludes NCHS salaries, sample redesign, etc. Assumes no cost-cutting measures taken  $\geq 2009$ . Assumes the maximum sample size remains at  $\sim 87,500 \geq 2006$ . Assumes (conservatively) that costs will increase by 8% per year  $\geq 2009$ . See Table 1 (handout): Green, blue, & purple on this graph correspond to green, blue, & purple rows in Table 1.

# Cost-cutting options, FY 2009-2012

- **Previously implemented & being considered each year**
  - Reduce sample size
  - Skip interviewer classroom refresher training
- **New considerations**
  - Eliminate screening for (oversampling) blacks, Hispanics, & Asians
  - Reduce questionnaire content

# Cost-cutting option: Reduce sample size

- Census estimates of 2009 cost savings:
  - Reduce by 12.5%: \$1.0 million
  - Reduce by 50%: \$3.8 million
  - Reduce by 75%: \$8.3 million

## Implications

- Nonlinear: Diminishing returns as cuts increase. Fixed costs are not reduced by sample cuts.
- NHIS design & Census infrastructure are too complex for sample cuts to generate major savings. Major redesign is required to achieve major savings via sample cuts.
- Could lose supplement sponsors or have to charge less.

# Cost-cutting option:

## Skip interviewer classroom refresher training

- Estimated FY2008 cost savings were ~\$900,000.

### Implications

- Lower data quality
- Loss of synergy and morale-boosting experienced with in-person group training
- Can still do extra self-administered training using Census-developed training software. This costs extra, but is better than nothing, and these modules can be good teachers & provide consistency.

# Cost-cutting option: Eliminate screening for (oversampling) blacks, Hispanics, & Asians

- Census estimate of 2009 cost savings (keeping total sample size the same) = \$1.4 million

## Implications

- Estimates for those minorities will have lower precision
- Can combine adjacent years of data, but:
  - ...Trends will be blurred.
  - ...Most supplements (including Healthy People questions) are not on the NHIS in adjacent years.
- See Table 2 (handout).

# Cost-cutting option: Reduce questionnaire content

- Cost savings: unknown

## Implications

- Loss of valuable multivariate data & trend info
- Marginal cost change from adding/removing questions is relatively small; most of the cost is incurred getting in the door
- Could reduce core & use freed-up time for more sponsored supplements (if they are available)

# Some major 2013 redesign options

- Combine questionnaires with NHANES
- Fewer PSUs (now have ~420, with sample in every state & DC)
- Dual frame (e.g., in-person + telephone)
- Develop a flexible design that can be ramped up or cut down efficiently
- Remain a Title 15 survey, but reduce listing by using commercial address files
- Field NHIS under Title 13 authority instead of Title 15 authority

## Implications

- Requires developmental work, time, & money
- Need to start work now
- These options could have implications on the data collection agent



## Table 1. NHIS Income and Expenses, 2007-2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
NCHS Funds <sup>1</sup>	<b>\$13.8</b>	<b>\$14.6</b>	<b>\$14.6</b>	<b>\$14.6</b>	<b>\$14.6</b>	<b>\$14.6</b>
Net Reimbursable Funds <sup>2,3</sup>	<b>\$5.7</b>	<b>\$5.8</b>	<b>\$6.1</b>	<b>\$6.4</b>	<b>\$6.7</b>	<b>\$7.0</b>
Carry over funds from previous year	<b>\$3.0</b>	<b>\$3.4</b>	<b>\$2.6</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>
Net NHIS Income	<b>\$22.4</b>	<b>\$23.8</b>	<b>\$23.3</b>	<b>\$21.0</b>	<b>\$21.3</b>	<b>\$21.6</b>
Reimbursable Funds Used	<b>\$5.2</b>	<b>\$6.6</b>	<b>\$8.7</b>	<b>\$6.4</b>	<b>\$6.7</b>	<b>\$7.0</b>
NHIS Expenses <sup>4,5</sup>	<b>\$19.0</b>	<b>\$21.2</b>	<b>\$23.9</b>	<b>\$25.8</b>	<b>\$27.9</b>	<b>\$30.1</b>
Balance (Deficit)	<b>\$3.4</b>	<b>\$2.6</b>	<b>(\$0.6)</b>	<b>(\$4.8)</b>	<b>(\$6.6)</b>	<b>(\$8.5)</b>
Additional Funds Needed	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$0.6</b>	<b>\$4.8</b>	<b>\$6.6</b>	<b>\$8.5</b>

Notes: All figures in millions. <sup>1</sup>Assumes flat funding ≥2008. <sup>2</sup>Net after deduction of overhead. <sup>3</sup>Assumes reimbursables increase by 5% per year ≥2008. <sup>4</sup>Includes Census and other costs; excludes NCHS salaries, sample redesign, etc.; assumes no cost-cutting measures taken ≥2009; assumes the maximum sample size remains at ~87,500 ≥2006. <sup>5</sup>Assumes (conservatively) that costs will increase by 8% per year ≥2009.

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**Table 2. Estimated percentages (and frequencies) of racial/ethnic subgroups in the 2009 NHIS interviewed sample, with and without screening**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b><u>Without</u> screening (similar distribution to the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population)</b>	<b><u>With</u> screening (unweighted)</b>
Hispanics	15% (13,125)	24% (21,000)
Non-Hispanic blacks	13% (11,375)	16% (14,000)
Non-Hispanic Asians	4% (3,500)	6% (5,250)
Non-Hispanic others	68% (59,500)	54% (47,250)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100% (87,500)</b>	<b>100% (87,500)</b>

Notes: Assumes no sample cuts taken in 2009, so the sample size remains at its maximum (87,500) since the 2006 redesign was implemented.