Sources of Data for Use in Epidemiology

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter the reader will be able to:

● identify bibliographic databases for locating epidemiologic research literature
● note U.S. government sources of epidemiologic data (e.g. census, vital statistics, and others)
● discuss criteria for assessing the quality and utility of epidemiologic data
● indicate privacy and confidentiality issues that pertain to epidemiologic data
● discuss the uses, strengths, and weaknesses of various epidemiologic data sources
● locate a given source of data using resources available on the Internet

Study Questions

Instructions: Fill in the blanks with the terms below.

availability of the data  nature of the data
California Health Interview Survey (CHIS)  record linkage
completeness  registry
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)  reportable and notifiable diseases
life insurance
multiphasic screening

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1. ____________ is the administration of two or more screening tests during a single program. (p. 260)
2. The criterion ______________ includes whether the sources of data are vital statistics, case registries, records from medical practice, surveys of the general population, or cases from hospitals and clinics. (p. 239)
3. The criterion ______________ relates to the investigator’s access. (p. 239)
4. Related to the extent of population coverage is the criterion ______________ of the data, which refers to the thoroughness of identification of all cases with a particular health phenomenon, including subclinical cases. (p. 274)
5. The term ______________ refers to joining data from two or more sources, for example, employment records and mortality data. (p. 245)
6. The ______________ provides information on health and demographic characteristics of California residents. (p. 266)
7. In contrast to health insurance statistics, ______________ statistics provide data on causes of mortality among insured groups and also on the results of physical examinations for those applying for insurance policies. (p. 267)
8. A ______________ is a centralized database for collection of information about a disease. (p. 260)
9. By legal statute, physicians and other healthcare providers must report cases of certain diseases, known as ______________, to health authorities. (p. 254)
10. On August 21, 1996, the federal government enacted the ______________. This law protects individually identifiable health information. (p. 245)