



Best Practices for SEER-MHOS Manuscript Submissions

The Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program's Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (MHOS) Data Use Agreement (DUA) specifies that all manuscripts must be submitted to seer-mhos@hsag.com for NCI review and clearance. To ensure speedy review and approval, you are encouraged to follow these **10 best practices**:

1. **DUA Alignment:** Does your manuscript align with the aims listed in your approved DUA?
2. **Determine whether it is aligned with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) Small Cell Suppression Policy:**
 - Are all data values ≥ 11 in text, tables, and figures?
 - Is it possible to derive values < 11 ?
3. **Terminology:** Ensure that the manuscript refers to SEER-MHOS as a "linked data resource," not as a dataset.
4. **SEER and MHOS Description – Recognize that Registries and Instruments Vary Over Time:**
 - SEER-MHOS is a large population-based sample and is not nationally representative. Verify that SEER-related citations are up to date based on currently available information.
 - Be mindful that MHOS-sampled Medicare Advantage plan enrollees include individuals younger than 65 years of age who are eligible for Medicare due to disabilities or end-stage renal disease. Sample size and eligibility criteria have varied over time. Note whether these patients were included in the analysis.
 - Double-check the survey versions that are relevant to your study period and cite which versions were used.
5. **MHOS Timing:** When including multiple MHOS surveys per person, specify the timing relative to the cancer diagnosis.
6. **Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQOL) Measures:**
 - Include citations for the 36-Item Short Form Survey (SF-36) and/or Veterans RAND 12-Item Health Survey (VR-12) measures when relevant.
 - When applicable, indicate that the VR-12 Physical Component Scores and Mental Component Scores use 1990 U.S. norms.
 - When applicable, include a citation for bridging the SF-36 and VR-12 measures. Refer to the [SEER-MHOS Data Documentation](#) for details on the MHOS-derived scale scores.
7. **Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) Measures:** Include citations for HEDIS HOS technical specifications.
8. **Variable Clarity—Multiple Variables May Be Available for the Same Construct:**
 - Clarify data sources (e.g., for race/ethnicity: Did you use CMS administrative data or self-reports?).
 - Indicate when variables are grouped or suppressed for privacy purposes.
9. **Measure Definitions:** Some variable definitions have changed over time. When pooling across years, specify the measure definitions and years used. (Measures may include HRQOL, pain interference, body mass index, and depression screening.)
10. **Data Availability:** Note any variables that are not available in all years or are affected by survey skip patterns in text, tables, and figures.