



**AMCHIP2010 Annual Meeting  
Preconference Data Skills  
Training Workshop  
March 7, 2010, 9am-4pm**

**State MCH Data Records Linkage Practice: Methodological Approaches**

**Background**

Data record linkage systems are becoming critical for MCH epidemiology research at the state and local public health settings to drive policy, program planning and evaluation. There are organizational variations in MCH linked data systems with different goals and capabilities. It is imperative that state MCH data linkage systems share and understand the range of organizational and strategic data linkage methods in order to help guide their service delivery and improve programs and policy applications. Because of the complexity of the data records linkage methods involved, efficiency in methodological applications are critical in developing an effective state data records linkage system.

**Training objectives**

Upon completion of the training, the participants will be able to:

- 1) Identify the essential components needed to develop an effective state data records linkage system,
- 2) Describe basic and advanced data records linking methods, and
- 3) Assess potential challenges and strategies to overcome the methods complexity.

**Impact on State MCH/CSHCN programs**

The training will enhance the skills needed by the state data program staff to analyze linked datasets to inform programs and policy at their agencies. The specific skills learned will be directly applied to on-going data projects and used in various job-related settings. Participants will understand the range of organizational and strategic data linking methods needed to link different datasets to improve MCH populations' service delivery and health outcomes.

**Training methods & approaches**

The training will be interactive with exercise activities. The exercises will include examples of linked data files from vital statistics (birth and fetal death records, hospital discharge summaries, and birth defects registry, etc). Participants will review data linking methods with discussions not

limited to basic and advanced techniques such as manual linkage, deterministic and probabilistic record linkage.

**Prerequisites to participate:** None

**Trainer**

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