

**Documentation of Mortality Statistics and Cause of Death Codes  
for MIDUS and Milwaukee Refresher Samples**

**March, 2021**

This memo accompanies a dataset containing known MIDUS and Milwaukee Refresher decedents (N=167) as of March, 2021. These decedents include those found through a National Death Index (NDI) Plus<sup>1</sup> search of the finalized death records for 2018, as well as any cases found by the MIDUS Administrative Core via longitudinal sample maintenance through early 2021. Note that the decedent information through 2018 is considered comprehensive and “complete” due to the NDI search, while decedent data after 2018 are considered partial since they are a byproduct of ongoing longitudinal sample maintenance efforts.

The updated dataset: MIDUS\_Refresher\_MortalityCauseData\_N167\_20210305

This new dataset updates the previous file (that was dated 20200217 and available through the MIDUS Portal <https://midus.colectica.org/>) with 6 new cases. The previous version of the Refresher mortality dataset was produced by a search of the Early Release NDI Plus file for 2018<sup>2</sup>, along with extensive tracing performed by UW Survey Center (UWSC) during the same year with the purpose of identifying decedent status and obtaining information about their underlying cause of death if available.

All reported 2018 deaths that matched submitted cases<sup>3</sup> were returned to MIDUS from the NDI Plus search. Additionally, longitudinal data maintenance efforts in the MIDUS core (via birthday cards, newsletters, respondent communication, etc.) augmented the NDI search to disambiguate multiple potential matches and provide additional confirmation of death when available.

This mortality dataset is a flat file containing 167 cases with confirmed decedent status. The dataset contains 7 variables that can be combined with or linked to other core MIDUS Refresher datasets via the MRID variable. The focal variables are:

- DECEASED indicates decedent status.
- DOD\_M and DOD\_Y indicate the month and year of death.

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<sup>1</sup> To be eligible for an NDI search, each record must contain at least one of the following combinations of data items: (a) First and last name and SSN, (b) First and last name and month and year of birth, (c) SSN and full date of birth and sex. All submitted Refresher cases met this criterion.

<sup>2</sup> Death records for a particular calendar year will be available for NDI Routine searches when approximately 90+% of the year’s death records have been received and processed (under the “Early Release Program”), but no later than 6 months after the end of the calendar year.

<sup>3</sup> The NDI does not provide one exact match for each submitted case. Rather, depending on the completeness and uniqueness of each case’s submitted information, several potential matches per case may be returned, a situation requiring substantial analysis by the MIDUS Admin Core to identify true matches.

- CAUSE\_ICD10 contains the 10<sup>th</sup> revision of the ICD (International Classification of Diseases) codes (ICD–10) and are used by NDI Plus to classify deaths occurring in 1999 and afterwards.

- The ICD–10 code sets include approximately 72,000 procedures and 70,000 diagnoses. The complete ICD–10 coding manual as of FY 2019 is available from:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/icd/data/10cmguidelines-FY2019-final.pdf>

- This variable contains underlying cause of death provided via the ICD–10 codes. The ICD–10 codes provided by the NDI Plus search have not been modified or changed in this dataset, but the MIDUS Administrative Core appended descriptive labels to each ICD–10 code using source material provided by NDI.

- Underlying cause of death is defined as “(a) the disease or injury which initiated the train of events leading directly to death, or (b) the circumstances of the accident or violence which produced the fatal injury” (World Health Organization; Manual of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries, and Causes of Death, based on the recommendations of the Ninth Revision Conference, 1975; Geneva; 1977). For more information about how NDI Plus provides cause of death information, see NDI user guide: [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/ndi/ndi\\_users\\_guide.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/ndi/ndi_users_guide.pdf)