

Background

The foundation of population health management is descriptive analysis of the demographics, health status and needs of the enrolled population. Profiling the number of provider encounters related to chronic conditions or diseases provides an indicator of the health status of the population and demand for services. Such information assists in designing or purchasing services to prevent the progression of disease. Military Treatment Facility (MTF) based services as case management and evidence-based protocols can then be directed toward high-volume conditions.

Low Back Pain (LBP) (Acute) Prevalence

Back injuries account for nearly 20% of all injuries and illness in the workplace and cost the nation 20 to 50 billion dollars per year. LBP adversely influences fitness for duty and long-term productivity throughout the Military Health System (MHS).

LBP tends to be a self-limiting problem of relatively short duration, the majority of patients can be expected to improve within six weeks of treatment with a combination of activity motivation, oral medication, self-applied thermal therapies, physical therapy, and manual therapy according to symptoms. DOD/VA guidelines address "mandatory" provisions that call for referral of chronic sciatica patients to a surgical specialist if 1) LBP has continued more than six weeks and 2) results of imaging studies are positive.

The intent of this data set is to assist the Military Treatment Facility (MTF) in the epidemiological assessment of acute LBP. This file provides a list of patients in all beneficiary categories who had at least two outpatient visits for LBP during the measurement period. The duty Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) and Unit are provided for Air Force active duty personnel. The purpose of this information is to assist the MTFs in identifying opportunities to target preventive interventions. The file can also assist in identifying patients with a high volume of outpatient visits to determine if care is consistent with established guidelines (e.g., DoD/VA guideline for LBP).

Measure Definition:

The proportion of MTF enrollees, 18 years or older, with a minimum of two outpatient visits for LBP/sciatica, in a MTF during the past year.

Benchmark:

N/A

Numerator:

Number of enrolled beneficiaries, 18 years or older, with a minimum of two outpatient visits for LBP/sciatica, in a MTF during the past year.

Denominator:

Number of MTF enrolled beneficiaries, 18 years or older.

Data Sources:

- Defense Eligibility Enrollment Registration System (DEERS)
- Standard Ambulatory Data Record (SADR) (M2)
- Comprehensive Ambulatory/Professional Encounter Record (CAPER)
- Composite Health Care System (CHCS) Managed Care Platform National Enrollment Database (NED) module
- Air Force Personnel System (AFPERS)

Methodology:

- Use DEERS to identify beneficiaries at least 18 years old enrolled to MTFs.
- Use CAPER (M2), (SADR) (M2) to identify patients seen for LBP at primary care clinics.
- Use CHCS Managed Care Platform NED module ad hoc report to identify the Primary Care Manager.
- Use Air Force Personnel System (AFPERS) to identify the AFSC and rank of active duty personnel.

Data Sources & Codes:**ICD-9-CM Codes to identify patients with LBP:**

- 724.2 – 724.5
- 724.8
- 846.X
- 847.2
- 847.3
- 847.4

Codes for LBP exclude: cauda equina syndrome, progressive neurological deficit, fracture, neoplasm, infection, chronic pain syndrome, persistent pain from previous spinal surgery and extra-spinal condition.

Codes to identify patients seen at primary care clinics:

MEPRS Code	Description
BGA	Family Practice
BHA	Primary Care
BJA	Flight Medicine
BDA	Pediatric
BAA	Internal Medicine
BHI	Intermediate Care
BIA	Emergency Department

Prevalence Report:

MTF list of all enrolled patients, by PCM, with at least two coded outpatient visits for LBP/sciatica.¹

Prevalence Report Data Elements:

- ➔ ACG RUB (only AF users: see ACG methodology)
- ➔ Patient's name
- ➔ Sponsor's Social Security Number
- ➔ Family Member Prefix (FMP)
- ➔ Date of Birth
- ➔ Age
- ➔ Gender
- ➔ Beneficiary Category (BENCAT)
- ➔ PCM
- ➔ Provider Group
- ➔ DAFSC – Duty Air Force Specialty Code
- ➔ Encounter Date
- ➔ ICD-9 Code
- ➔ Total number of Visits
- ➔ Source
- ➔ Contact Info
- ➔ Defense Medical Information System (DMIS)

- ➔ Notes detail for LBP Acute and/or Generic notes entered by users

Recommended Action

- ➔ Review medical records for patients listed
- ➔ Identify trends within active duty units and consider possible interventions
- ➔ Consider DoD/VA Guidelines for LBP²

Notes:

¹ Due to the record reporting lag time, not all of the previous months' records may be included in this reporting period.

² DoD/VA guidelines can be located at <https://www.qmo.amedd.army.mil/pguide.htm>