

2008 Low Income Subsidy (LIS) Targeting Spreadsheets: An Example of How the Spreadsheets Can Be Used

To aid local outreach efforts in targeting their resources, CMS has provided two files, in both comma separated value [CSV] and Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, one at the county level and the other at the zip code level. These files contain the total number of Medicare beneficiaries eligible for Part D coverage, the estimated number of beneficiaries in the target audience, and the estimated percentage of the Medicare Part D eligible population in the target audience as of April 2008. The estimated number of beneficiaries in the target audience allows users to view the counties or zip codes that have the highest number of people estimated in the target audience. Outreach in these areas may reach the most beneficiaries. The estimated percentage of the Medicare population allows users to view areas with the highest density of people in the target audience. Outreach in these areas may be more efficient in that beneficiaries reached would be more likely to qualify for the low-income subsidy. Here we provide examples of how the data filters in the Excel files can be used to narrow the amount of data one looks at to target their efforts. The CSV files can be imported into other database programs for sorting and use of the information. A description of how the data was developed is at the end of this document.

The Excel spreadsheets have seven columns that reflect state, county, total Medicare beneficiaries eligible for Part D, estimated number in target audience, estimated percent in target audience, state fips code, and county fips code. The fips codes will allow use of the data with mapping software. The zip code spreadsheet has an additional column for the zip code. Each column has a filter which allows for a quick and easy analysis to find areas to target outreach. A filtered range displays only the rows that meet the criteria that are specified for a column. Figure 1 demonstrates how to filter for one state, in this case, North Carolina.

Figure 1: Filtering for a Particular State

9	State	County	Total Medicare Beneficiaries Eligible for Part D	Estimated Number in Target Audience	Estimated Percent in Target Audience	FIPS State Code	FIPS County Code
	Montana	Itauga	7,464	255	3	01	001
	Nebraska	aldwin	31,788	851	3	01	003
	Nevada	arbour	5,153	275	5	01	005
	New Hampshire	bb	3,830	188	5	01	007
	New Jersey	ount	9,175	384	4	01	009
	New Mexico	ullock	1,765	92	5	01	011
	New York	ttler	4,203	277	7	01	013
	North Carolina	alhoun	22,544	1,885	8	01	015
	North Dakota	ambers	7,157	615	9	01	017
	Ohio	erokee	5,221	345	7	01	019
	Oklahoma	hilton	6,931	343	5	01	021
	Oregon	noctaw	3,340	307	9	01	023
	Pennsylvania	arke	5,267	362	7	01	025
	Rhode Island	ay	3,041	207	7	01	027
	South Carolina	eburne	2,865	347	12	01	029
	South Dakota	offee	8,394	393	5	01	031
	Tennessee						
	Texas						
	Utah						
	Vermont						
	Virginia						
	Washington						
	West Virginia						
	Wisconsin						
	Wyoming						

Now that we've narrowed our analysis to North Carolina, we can filter the counties to meet our needs. We've decided to identify the counties with the greatest number of beneficiaries in the target audience and then sort them so those with the highest percentage of beneficiaries in the target audience are at the top. The result, Figure 2, was accomplished by filtering for the top 10% in the Estimated Number in Target Audience column and then filtering in descending order in the Estimated Percentage column. Figure 2 shows that in Johnston County, North Carolina there are approximately 1,301 Medicare beneficiaries in the target audience, representing 7% of all beneficiaries eligible for Part D in that county. Figure 2 also shows that Mecklenberg County has the largest estimated number in the target audience, but that number represents only 3% of the total Medicare beneficiaries within the county.

People in North Carolina will tell you Johnston and Mecklenberg counties have different characteristics that would be important to understand when targeting outreach. For example, Johnston County, North Carolina is smaller with a Part D eligible population of approximately 19,332 people, is geographically located near the center of North Carolina and has ten towns, including: Smithfield (county seat), Clayton, Selma, Benson, Kenly, Four Oaks, Pine Level, Princeton, Wilson's Mills, and Micro. In contrast, Mecklenburg County, is the most populace county in the state with approximately 85,224 people eligible for Part D. Mecklenburg County contains seven municipalities including the City of Charlotte and the towns of Cornelius, Davidson, and Huntersville to the north; and the towns of Matthews, Mint Hill, and Pineville to the south and east.

Figure 2: Narrowing Analysis to North Carolina Counties with the Greatest Number in the Target Audience

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	2008 U.S. Counties Estimated LIS Potentially-Eligible Targets							
2								
3	Data are only estimates to identify areas to target LIS outreach. They are not exact counts of LIS eligible people. In areas where few							
4	people live, the percentage density numbers are particularly prone to variability. To protect confidentiality, counties with less than 10 total							
5	beneficiaries and less than 10 beneficiaries in the target audience were suppressed.							
6	Wisconsin data may include some beneficiaries receiving prescription coverage through the state pharmacy plus program.							
7	Data as of April 2008							
8								
9	State	County	Total Medicare Beneficiaries Eligible for Part D	Estimated Number in Target Audience	Estimated Percent in Target Audience	FIPS State Code	FIPS County Code	
1768	North Carolina	Iredell	22,633	1,534	7	37	097	
1778	North Carolina	Robeson	19,161	1,297	7	37	155	
1785	North Carolina	Johnston	19,332	1,301	7	37	101	
1793	North Carolina	Gaston	32,740	2,164	7	37	071	
1796	North Carolina	Randolph	22,274	1,376	6	37	151	
1801	North Carolina	Catawba	25,855	1,397	5	37	035	
1803	North Carolina	Alamance	24,619	1,324	5	37	001	
1808	North Carolina	Davidson	25,973	1,362	5	37	057	
1816	North Carolina	Buncombe	41,938	2,123	5	37	021	
1818	North Carolina	Cumberland	36,390	1,476	4	37	051	
1827	North Carolina	Forsyth	50,830	1,751	3	37	067	
1843	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	85,224	2,793	3	37	119	
1845	North Carolina	Guilford	66,429	2,048	3	37	081	
1859	North Carolina	Wake	78,921	2,317	3	37	183	
2940								
2941								
2942								

So far, the analysis suggests that outreach in Johnston County could be the most efficient and outreach to Mecklenburg County as a whole would be considerably less efficient. However, because Mecklenburg County has so many members in the target audience, we would want to work there as well. Therefore, it would be useful if targeting could be narrowed even further to the zip code level. Figure 3 provides an example of zip code data for Mecklenburg County.

Figure 3 is a snapshot from the zip code spreadsheet where a filter limited analysis to zip codes with at least 75 in the estimated target audience. We choose to filter the estimated number in the target audience of 75 or greater because of the large number of zip codes within this county. The estimated percentage in the target audience by zip code is displayed in descending order. This spreadsheet shows that the highest estimated number of the target audience in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina reside in zip code 28205 and the highest estimated percent reside in zip code 28206 and 20203.

Figure 3: Mecklenburg County Zip Codes with at Least 75 In the Target Audience by Estimated Percentage in Target Audience

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	2008 U.S. Zipcodes Estimated LIS Potentially-Eligible Targets							
2								
3	Data are only estimates to identify areas to target LIS outreach. They are not exact counts of LIS eligible people. In areas where few							
4	people live, the percentage density numbers are particularly prone to variability. To protect confidentiality zipcodes with less than 10 total							
5	beneficiaries and less than 10 beneficiaries in the target audience were suppressed. This represents about 7,600 or 29% of all zip codes.							
6	Wisconsin data may include some beneficiaries receiving prescription coverage through the state pharmacy plus waiver program.							
7	Data as of April 2008							
8								
9	State	County	Zipcode	Total Medicare Beneficiaries Eligible for Part D	Estimated Number in Target Audience	Estimated Percent in Target Audience	FIPS State Code	FIPS County Code
11793	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28206	1,291	104	8	37	119
11794	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28203	1,006	80	8	37	119
11795	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28205	4,534	315	7	37	119
11796	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28208	3,722	235	6	37	119
11797	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28215	4,376	255	6	37	119
11798	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28217	2,040	97	5	37	119
11799	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28213	2,216	95	4	37	119
11800	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28214	2,923	120	4	37	119
11801	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28227	4,667	191	4	37	119
11802	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28216	4,678	184	4	37	119
11803	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28209	2,617	87	3	37	119
11804	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28212	2,985	99	3	37	119
11805	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28210	5,276	121	2	37	119
11806	North Carolina	Mecklenburg	28269	3,648	75	2	37	119
18410								
18411								

How were estimates derived?

We used multiple sources of data and some approximations to estimate these numbers. First, we created a file of beneficiaries with no known source of prescription drug coverage. This file was created using Medicare Part D enrollment data, data reported by employers receiving retiree drug subsidies, and enrollment information about creditable drug coverage from other federal, state, and employer sources.

Next, we attempted to identify low income beneficiaries who might be eligible for the LIS. CMS does not have income information for beneficiaries. Therefore we needed to use an approximate method. We geo-coded each beneficiary's address into a census block group. We then assigned the median household income for the population age 65 and over for the block group (provided by the Census Bureau) to the beneficiary. Earlier CMS estimates indicate that up to 30 percent of beneficiaries may be eligible for the LIS. Using this as a guide, we created a file containing the 30 percent of beneficiaries with the lowest assigned incomes.

We then combined the two files above to create a file of beneficiaries with no known source of prescription drug coverage living in the lowest income areas. Counts of beneficiaries were aggregated to the zip code and county level. Zip codes and counties with fewer than 10 beneficiaries in the target population were excluded for confidentiality purposes.

The result is the county and zip-level files. Please remember that these are not actual counts of LIS-eligible individuals without prescription drug coverage. They are only estimates. We are providing these to partners to guide and support their LIS outreach efforts. These estimates can help to identify geographic areas with large numbers of beneficiaries who might be eligible for the low income subsidy and who have no other drug coverage. We encourage our partners to use these data in combination with their knowledge of local resources to help encourage enrollment of these vulnerable individuals in the Low Income Subsidy program.