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Ensuring Confidentiality in the COVID-19 Era

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COVID-19 Data Collection at NCHS

- Current:
  - Vital Statistics
    - Weekly preliminary counts of COVID-19 deaths
- Planned:
  - Health Interview Survey
    - Self-reports of doctor-diagnosed and testing-confirmed covid status
  - Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
    - Self-report and serology testing of covid status
  - Family of Health Care Surveys
    - PPE availability, test availability, patient referrals, telemedicine, providers testing positive for covid
Protecting Confidential Information at NCHS

- A variety of laws lay out data protection requirements:
  - Use limited to those specified at collection
  - Access limited to those specified by collectors
  - Personally identifiable data released only to those granted access by respondent
  - Data available for statistical uses only
- Penalties:
  - Up to 5 years in prison; up to $250,000 fine, loss of job
- Variety of safeguards: No offsite access; no portable media; annual training and nondisclosure agreement
Protecting Confidentiality While Providing Access

WONDER system provides controlled access to location data for vital events while ensuring confidentiality.

RDC provides researchers access to restricted data:
- Prepare research proposal
- Access data at RDC site
- Results reviewed before release
- Manuscript cleared by RDC analyst
Thanks!