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Subject: Ethics in the DHS surveys

Posted by [hannekeyserhegdahl](#) on Wed, 26 Aug 2015 11:38:15 GMT

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I am about to publish a paper using DHS data, but have been requested to provide information on whether or not the consent to participate was written or verbal, and if the consent was verbal give the reason why it was not written. I can't find any information on this in any of the reports, and there is nothing on the DHS website on this either. Can someone please help me?

Thanks alot!

Hanne

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Subject: Re: Ethics in the DHS surveys

Posted by [Liz-DHS](#) on Wed, 26 Aug 2015 20:36:09 GMT

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Dear User, Here is a response for one of our technical experts, Dr. Kia Reinis:

Quote:

We don't know which surveys you are referring to, so we will reply regarding DHS Standard procedures in a DHS survey. Verbal informed consent is sought from DHS respondents to the Household Questionnaire, the Woman's Questionnaire, the Man's Questionnaire, and for drawing blood in surveys which do so. Verbal informed consent is sought by the interviewer reading a prescribed statement to the respondent and recording in the questionnaire whether or not the respondent consented (or provided assent on behalf of minors). Then the interviewer signs his or her name attesting to the fact that he/she read the consent statement to the respondent. Thus, we do not ask the respondent to sign their name as the interviewer has attested that proper procedure was followed. The consent statements and procedures for recording consent and interviewers are part of the survey questionnaires, so see the Appendices of the final reports from the surveys you are using to understand the flow of the consent procedures. Consent statements (by that I refer to the prescribed statement, place where interviewer signs, and records the result of requesting consent) appear at the beginning of each questionnaire, and within the biomarker pages if blood was collected.

We would like to take this opportunity to suggest to all data users:

We highly recommend that all data analysts read the questionnaires that were used to collect the data. Questionnaires are published as an appendix in the final reports. The final reports can be downloaded from our website. Understanding the questionnaire content and flow often clears up some questions or assumptions data users may derive from only reading the data files.

Hanne, we appreciate your interest and use of DHS data, and your question.

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