Sozial- und Präventivmedizin Médecine sociale et préventive 23, 282–283 (1978)

National Research Program 1: Data flow and data handling

National Research Program Collaborative Group

1. Context of data collection

1.1 Invitations to the population

From the end of September on the populations of the two study communities were invited to take part in the baseline screening through a local mass media campaign. A questionnaire of about 20 pages was available in the pharmacies of the town and at the cardiovascular center. By a letter and a phone call when necessary, a number of selected people were personnally requested to participate.

1.2 Procedure of the baseline screening

Every person attending the screening first completes his questionnaire at home and returns it to the cardiovascular center. Several measurements will then be taken (such as weight, height, blood pressure) as well as a blood sample (in order to determine his cholesterol and his glucose rates). If his physical condition is good enough he will be tested on an ergometric bicycle. He is finally informed that he will be sent a "heart-pass" with his results.

1.3 Data analysis

The collected data will then be statistically analyzed. The analysis will bear not only on medical aspects but also on the way of life (dietary habits, physical activities, etc.). At the same time a sociological study will be performed.

2. Set-up of a basic file

A complete list of the population was obtained from the Official Register of Residents of each of the two study communities. After codification and card punching the basic file was generated. Besides the usual civil status data such as name, address, birth date, citizenship, date of arrival in the community, marital status, etc. an identification number (ID) was recorded for every individual. This number would allow to identify each person and would ensure confidentiality any time information is to be transmitted. At this point of data treatment the detected errors were simply deleted due to lack of time and staff.

3. Sampling and creation of individual cards

Once the basic file was created, the population was divided in 24 strata defined by criteria such as age, sex, cityenship (swiss-foreigner), etc. In each category a fixed number of persons was sampled. Individual cards were then printed containing name, address, birth date and selection or non-selection in the sample, as well as several detachable labels with the identification number (ID). These cards were stored at the cardiovascular center of each study community and the screening phase was able to start.

4. Recording the baseline screening data

According to Figure 1.

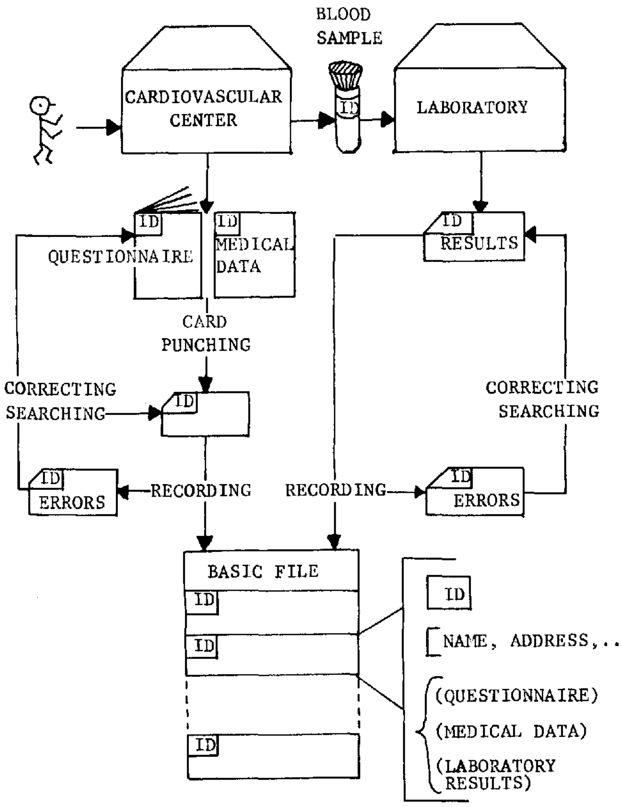

Figure 1 : RECORDING THE BASELINE SCREENING DATA

5. Participants not included in the basic file

In case a person attending the screening was not registred in the basic file (error, person recently arrived), he was immediately assigned as identification number (ID) when filling in an identification formular (name, address, birth date, citizenship, civil status, etc.). This would allow including him into the basic file.

6. Informing the participants about their results

When all the data concerning a person (questionnaire, medical data, laboratory results) is recorded - and as far as no error has occurred during the process - this person will be mailed his "heart-pass" by the cardiovascular center. Transmission of documents between the cardiovascular center and the computing staff, card punching and data recording are performed in batches. Since these operations are time consuming, a great deal of patience was sometimes required from the participants.

7. Chronology

In order to allow a good understanding of the several steps of data handling it is necessary to know about their chronology :

- Set-up of the basic file : June to September 1977
- Sampling and creation of individual cards : October 1977
- Recording of baseline screening data : October 1977 to June 1978
- Recording the participants not included in the basic file : February to June 1978
- Informing the participants about their results : January to June 1978
- Statistical analysis : from April 1978

Résumé

Programme National de Recherche 1 : traitement des informations

Les aspects pratiques du traitement des informations recueillies auprès de la population des deux villes d'intervention : construction d'un fichier de base, choix d'un échantillon et préparation de fiches individuelles, enregistrement des données de l'examen de base, communication des résultats aux participants, chronologie.

Zusammenfassung

Nationales Forschungsprogramm 1 : Datenfluss und Datenverarbeitung

Folgende Elemente des Datensystems des NFP 1 werden diskutiert : die Entwicklung des Grundlagenregisters, das Ziehen der Zufallsauswahlen, die Registrierung der Daten anlässlich der Grunduntersuchung sowie die Uebermittlung der Resultate an die Teilnehmer.

Manuscript prepared by:
F.Vittoz

NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM COLLABORATIVE GROUP
Project Directors: F.Gutzwiller, B.Junod
Scientific Expert: F.H.Epstein
Local Coordinators: A.Crisinel, K.Röthlisberger
Scientific Committee: Th.Abelin, M.Bassand, L.Biland, H.R.Brunner, W. Bürgi, A.Delachaux, H.Howald, O.Jeanneret, H.Micheli, O.Oetliker O.Ritter, G.Ritzel, J.L.Rivier, M.Schär, W.Vetter, L.K.Widmer
Statistical Analysis: M.Lejeune
Program Director: W.Schweizer
Grant Nr 4.077.0.76.01, Swiss National Science Foundation
We thank the EPFL Computer Center for their support.

Address for correspondence:
National Research Program 1
Institut de médecine sociale et préventive
1011 LAUSANNE - Switzerland