

## **Appendix A16. Guidelines for data transfer**

### *Data validation and verification*

The following checks for impossible values and the logical checks in appendix A15 have to be done before transferring data to the coordinating center:

After the data entry has been completed a checking program has to be run to check impossible values. Summary statistics (number of observations, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values) of all variables have to be calculated. Also, frequencies of all categorical variables have to be checked. Observations with impossible values have to be checked on the forms and typing errors have to be corrected.

There are logical connections between some variables in questionnaires. Observations with impossible combinations have to be displayed and checked. If the impossible combination is due to the typing error, it has to be corrected. If an impossible combination has been saved as it is in the questionnaire, then the inconsistency has to be solved according to the decision rules in the appendix A15.

It is important to store original data in order to be able to go back to the original data in case of doubt or inconsistencies in the data. Therefore, all the changes should be made in a working copy of the original data. A log should be kept of all the changes made in the working copy of the original data.

### *Data to be transferred*

The individual centers need to send following data to the coordinating center:

- baseline questionnaires 1 and 2 (physician and self-administered)
- diary
- clinical visit questionnaire
- clinical visit log book
- medication sheet
- spirometry

Each data have to be transferred in separate files. Because of data protection, subject's name must not be included in data. All data have to be identified only by a subject's identification number. The variables needed and the coding of the responses are described in the appendices A14 and A15. The variables in files have to be in same order as in the appendix A14.

Of diary data all available days of all study subjects have to transferred. Those days when a subject has not answered to any question have to be also included to preserve the time structure in the data.

The data files have to be named as follows:

	Amsterdam	Erfurt	Helsinki
Baseline questionnaire 1	BQ1AMS.DAT	BQ1ERF.DAT	BQ1HEL.DAT
Baseline questionnaire 2	BQ2AMS.DAT	BQ2ERF.DAT	BQ2HEL.DAT
Diary	DIARYAMS.DAT	DIARYERF.DAT	DIARYHEL.DAT
Clinical visit questionnaire	CLQAMS.DAT	CLQERF.DAT	CLQHEL.DAT
Clinical visit log book	CLLOGAMS.DAT	CLLOGERF.DAT	CLLOGHEL.DAT
Medication sheet	MEDICAMS.DAT	MEDICERF.DAT	MEDICHEL.DAT
Spirometry	SPIROAMS.DAT	SPIROERF.DAT	SPIROHEL.DAT

The correctness of the data transfer is checked by data transfer check forms (appendix 11). The individual centers have to fill in the forms and send them to the coordinating center by fax. The individual centers also have to send summary statistics (number of observations, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values) for all variables and also frequencies of categorical variables.

#### *Form of data transfer*

Data files have to be transferred in comma-delimited ASCII format. The files can be zipped (PKZIP 2.04 or WinZip 6.3) before sending them to the coordinating centre. Files can be sent by E-mail or alternatively by well packed 3.5 inch floppy disks. The data transfer check forms have to be sent by fax to the coordinating center.

An example of a file to be transferred (diary):

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101,8,12,1998,0,0,0,1,0,0,2,0,0,0,2,1,1,4,,1,0.5,1,,,,,,,,,,,,,1,1,0
102,8,12,1998,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,1,,,,,,,,,,,,,,10,0
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