

**Table 1. Summary of VA Pharmacy Data Sources**

Source	Events Covered	Data Format / Record Level	Advantages	Disadvantages
Pharmacy Benefit Management V3.0	all prescriptions	database <sup>1</sup> / prescription	all prescription characteristics, national coverage	cost data, dispensed units and NDC may be inaccurate
DSS – National Pharmacy Extract	all prescriptions	SAS file / prescription	national coverage, detailed cost data	limited data on prescription characteristics
DSS – National Data Extracts	all encounters	SAS file / person/day (OP) or person/bed-section/day (IP)	national coverage, detailed cost data	summary data without few prescription characteristics
DSS – Local Data Extracts	all encounters at one facility	ASCII file / person/day or person/bedsection/day	detailed prescription characteristics	each facility requires separate permission
Fee Basis Files	prescriptions at non-VA facilities	SAS file / prescription (OP) or encounter (IP)	unique coverage of prescriptions at non-VA facilities	few prescriptions in Fee Basis system
VISTA	all encounters at one facility	ASCII file / service or encounter	greatest detail of personal and utilization characteristics	facility-specific; requires MUMPS programming

AAC = Austin Automation Center VIREC = Veterans Affairs Information Resource Center OP= outpatient IP = inpatient

<sup>1</sup> Data extracts are available in MS Access<sup>®</sup> or MS Foxpro<sup>®</sup>.