ARIC MANUSCRIPT PROPOSAL FORM

Manuscript # 637

PC Received: 01/05/99   Status: _____   Priority: _____
SC Received: Status: _____   Priority: _____

1.a.   Full Title:

Relation between area-based and individual-level indicators of social position in young, middle aged, and older adults: results from the CARDIA, ARIC, and CHS cohorts.

b.   Abbreviated Title (Length 26):

Indicators of social position

2.   Writing Group (list individual with lead responsibility first):

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3.   Timeline:

Analyses could begin immediately. First draft should be completed by March 1999.
It is anticipated that the manuscript would be submitted for publication by September, 1999.

4.   Rationale:

Over the past few years there has been growing interest in the use of area-based measures of socioeconomic position in studies of social inequalities and health. Their use has been proposed both as alternate indicators of socioeconomic position when individual-level indicators are unavailable, and as indicators of contextual neighborhood characteristics that may be related to health outcomes independently of individual level indicators. In both cases, their use in predicated on the fact that the characteristics of the places in which people live may be important to people=s health.

However, there has been little systematic exploration of (a) the relationship between area indicators measured at different levels (e.g. census-tract and block-group based measures); (b) the interrelationship between the multiple area indicators of socioeconomic position available in the census; and (c) the relation between area indicators and individual level indicators of social position routinely collected in epidemiological studies, particularly if this relation differs across the lifespan or in different race/ethnic groups. Answers to these questions are important to researchers interested in using these types of measures in their analyses.

Main Study Questions:

Using area data from 1990 U.S. census and individual-level data from three large longitudinal studies conducted in 10 diverse areas of the United States we will examine:

the agreement between census tract indicators and similar indicators measured at the block group-level
differences in factor patterns across study sites both at the block group and census tract level
associations between individual-level indicators and area measures.

 In addition, because the three cohort studies were based on three distinct age ranges and two large race/ethnic groups, it will also possible to investigate whether the interrelationship between individual and area indicators differed across the age range and by ethnicity. Individual-level data from the three studies (CARDIA, ARIC, and CHS) will be presented separately.

6.   Data (variables, time window, source, inclusions/exclusions):

ARIC analyses will use the following data:

Socioeconomic indicators collected at baseline and updated at visit 3
Neighborhood geocodes (already available for visit 1) and in the process of being geocoded for visit 3.
Demographic information collected at baseline.

Persons with missing socioeconomic indicators or without geocodes will be excluded from the analyses.