Health Statistics on the Web

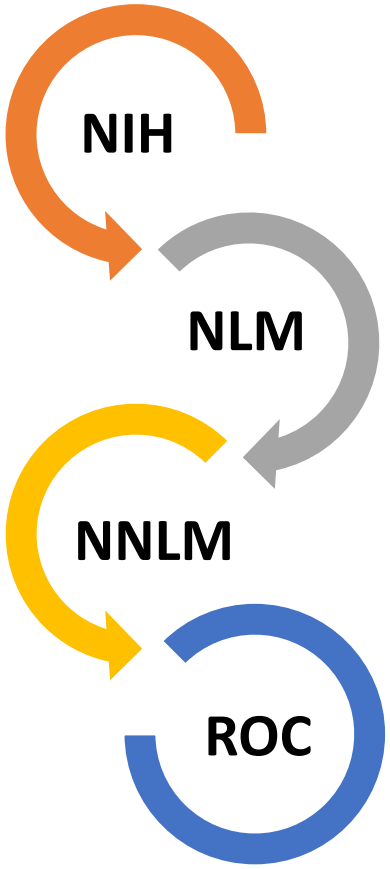
Network of the National Library of Medicine

February 15,

2024

NNLM
Network of the
National Library of Medicine

National Institutes of Health
Nation's leading research agency



National Library of Medicine
World's largest biomedical library

Network of the National Library of Medicine
Outreach program of the NLM

Regions, Offices, and Centers
7 regional medical libraries
3 national offices
4 national centers

Objectives

Recognize	Understand	Identify
• Recognize the differences between data, data sets, and statistics.	• Understand a four-step process used to locate relevant health statistics for a particular circumstance or issue.	• Identify online resources that provide health statistics at the national, state, and local level.

Class Materials

PowerPoint slides

Online table

Guided handout

Agenda

- Statistics overview
- Steps to finding health statistics
- Live demonstration of key resources
- Wrap up

Data vs. Statistics

Data

- Raw numbers
- Counts of individual events or services
- Collected at local, state, national, etc. levels

Data set

- Major unit of data storage and retrieval
- Data collected & organized according to criteria
- May or may not represent entire population

Statistics

- Data analyzed and summarized
- Most data on websites are compiled statistics
- Presented as percentage, graph, table, map, etc.

Key Features of Health Statistics

- A numerical summary of data computed on samples
- Characterize the health of a population and the influences that affect health
- Parameters are values that describes a characteristic of a population
- Often collected and analyzed over a specific period
- Collected to meet needs of the collector

Uses of Health Statistics

Provide information about the health of a population and what influences it

Monitor health status and risk factors

Guide research, policy, and program development

Evaluate research, policy and program effectiveness

Steps to Finding Health Statistics

1. Formulate the question
2. Choose the best resource
3. Evaluate the results
4. Repeat as necessary

Class Exercise Part I:

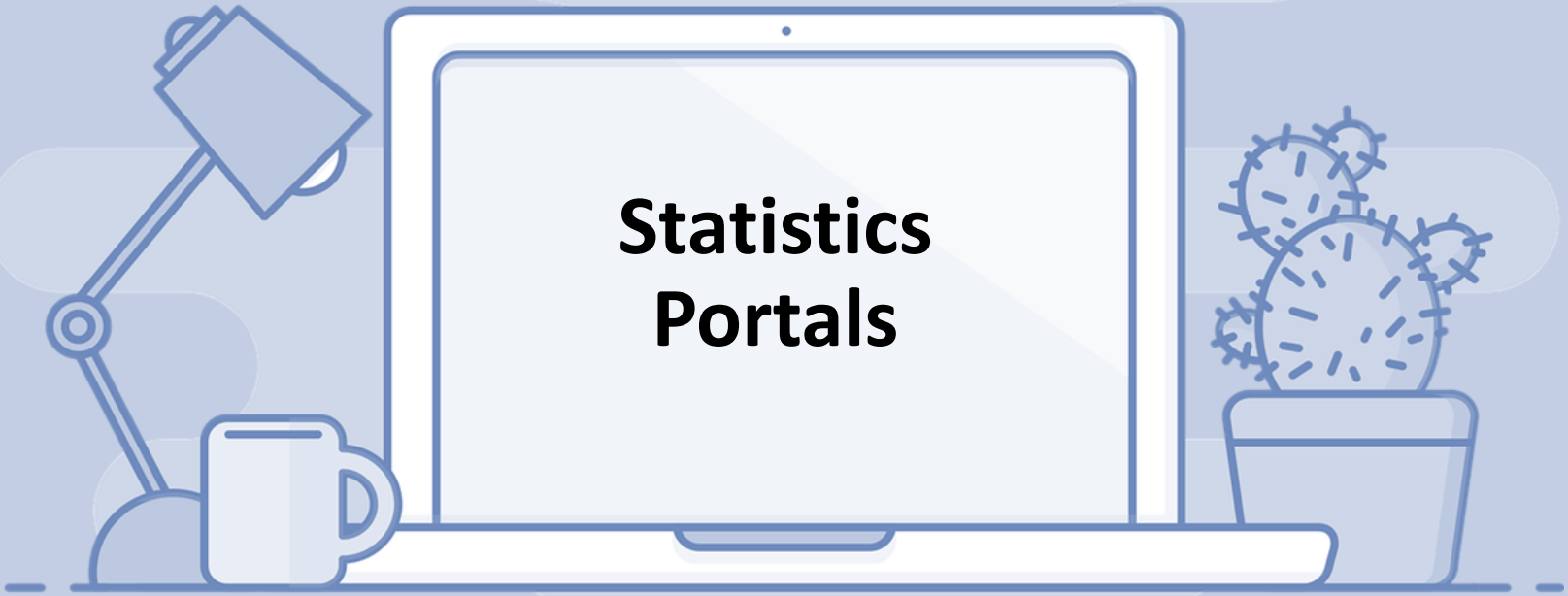
What question or topic will you search today?

Take two minutes to formulate a question for a health statistic you are interested in finding today. You may want to include age, range, geography, and/or time frame in your question.

Example questions:

- What percentage of adults aged 21 and over reported having coronary heart disease in Kentucky in 2019?
- How has the rural-urban distribution of the geriatric patient population in the United States changed over the last decade?

Statistics Portals



National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)

- Principal health statistics agency for the U.S.
- Part of Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) since 1987
- Compiles statistics from numerous data sources
- Provides information to guide decisions on policies, the health care system, and health disparities
- Adheres to quality guidelines to maximize the integrity of the information provided to the public

MedlinePlus

- National Library of Medicine's consumer health portal
- Information on diseases and conditions, wellness issues, drugs and supplements, and medical tests
- Sourced from over 500 vetted organizations
- Health Topic pages can be used to quickly access statistics on a particular topic

Questions?

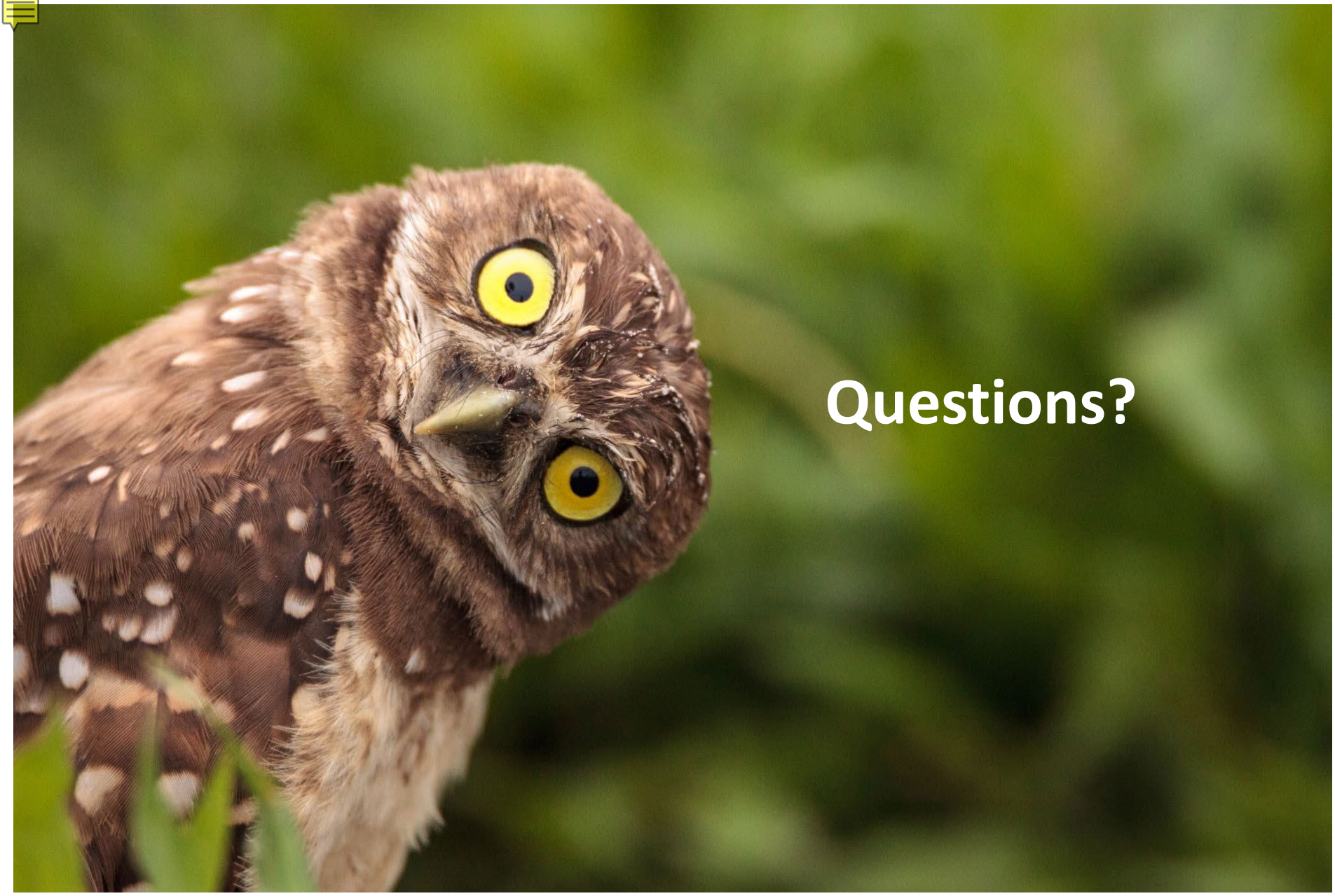
National Statistics

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

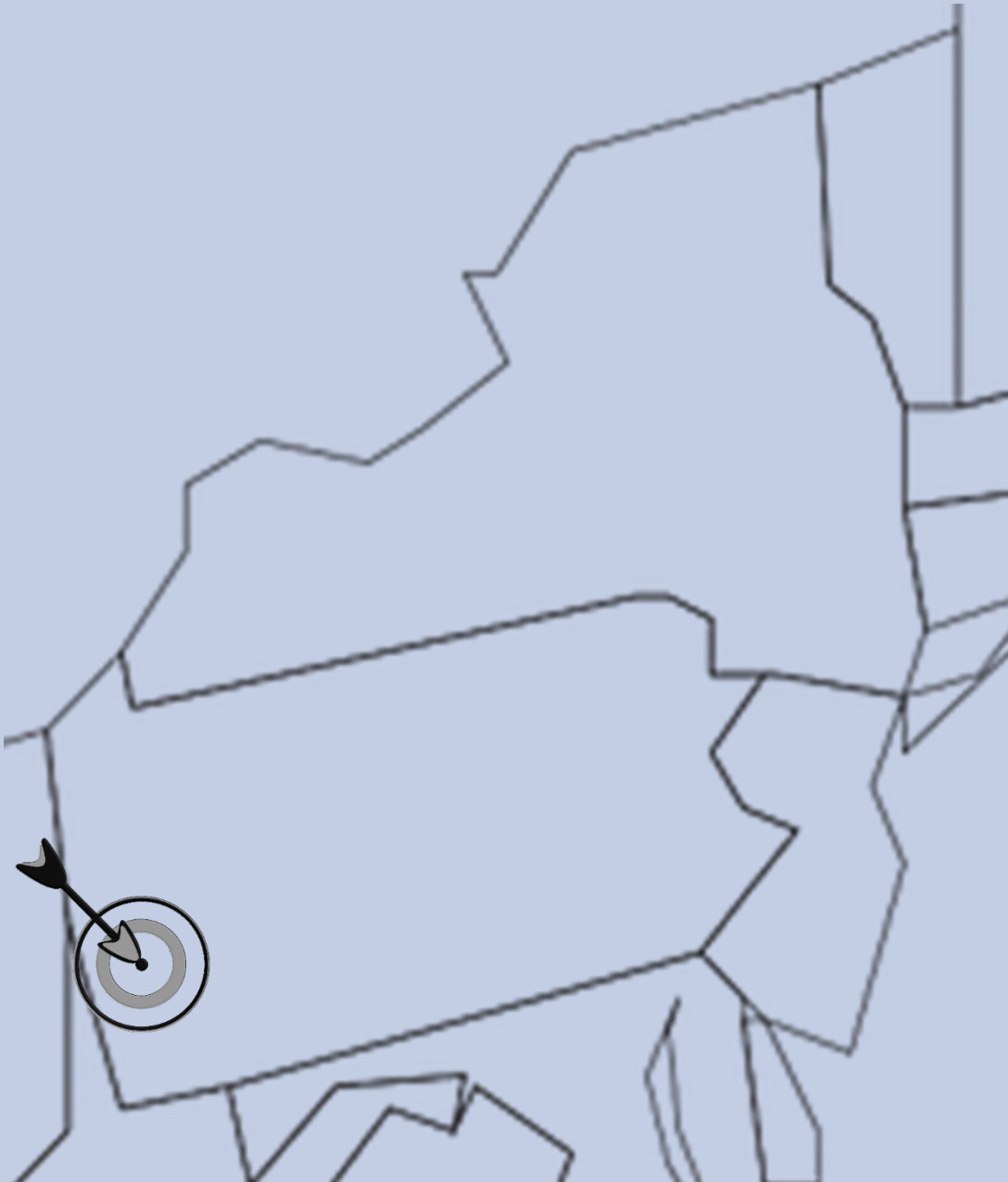
- Sponsored by the CDC and other federal agencies
- World's largest continuously conducted health survey
  - Health risk behaviors
  - Chronic conditions
  - Use of preventive services
- Collects self-reported data from all 50 states, Washington D.C., and U.S. territories

State Health Facts

- Produced by the Kaiser Family Foundation
- Provides data at the national and state level
- Over 800 health indicators including:
  - Demographics and economy
  - Women's health
  - Minority health
  - Health insurance


Questions?

Local Statistics



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U.S. Census Bureau

- Federal government's largest statistical agency
- Provides facts and figures about America's people, places, and economy
- Levels include state, county, city, town, zip code, census tract, congressional district, tribal areas
- Other surveys available include:
  - American Community Survey
  - Current Population Survey
  - Survey of Income and Program Participation

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

- Collaboration between Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute
- Ranks counties on key health factors and health outcomes
- Statistics at the county level on factors such as:
    - Quality of life
    - Health behavior
    - Social and economic factors
    - Physical environment

City Health Dashboard

- Created by the Department of Population Health and the School of Public Service at NYU in partnership with the National Resource Network
- Over 40 measures of health for over 900 U.S. cities
- Data at the city, zip code, and census tract levels
- Measures align with County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

Rural Health Information Hub (RHIhub)

- Funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
- National clearinghouse on rural health issues
- Statistics for metro and non-metro counties on:

  Demographics
  Health disparities
  Social determinants
  Access to services

National Neighborhood Data Archive

- Cognability – how your neighborhood supports cognitive health through places to be physically active, socially engaged, and keep your mind active
- NaNDA Data Repository – open data for research questions that address "place"
  - Social Determinants of Health
  - Crime rates
  - Police districts
  - Polluting sites
  - Public transit

NaNDA Health Bytes Recording (scroll to bottom)

Questions?

Class Exercise Part II

Take five minutes and use the question you formulated in Part 1 to explore steps 2 through 4 of the 4-step process for locating health statistics.

Perform a search for your question and take some notes on what you find.

Step 2. Choose the best resource

Step 3. Evaluate what you've found

Step 4. Repeat as needed

Final Questions and Evaluation

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More trainings available at NNLM.gov/training

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