Institutional Profile Survey (IPS) Frequently Asked Questions

Find answers to common questions about accessing, completing, and submitting the Institutional Profile Survey (IPS), as well as guidance for responding to specific survey questions.

IPS Overview and Participation

WHAT IS THE IPS?

The ACHA Institutional Profile Survey (IPS) gathers a complete picture of the institutional resources that support student health and well-being at ACHA member institutions, each academic year. The survey forms the foundation of ACHA's College Health and Well-Being Data Hub ("ACHA Data Hub") and is required for participation in it. By providing consistent, comparable data across institutions, the IPS enables meaningful benchmarking and national comparisons across college health programs.

WHY SHOULD MY INSTITUTION PARTICIPATE IN THE IPS?

Participating in the IPS contributes to a stronger and more robust understanding of college health services, programs, policies, and resources nationwide. Participation also provides eligible institutions with access to the ACHA Data Hub, where users can benchmark their institution against peer and reference groups and explore data to support informed decision-making and student success.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SECTIONS A, B, AND C OF THE IPS?

The IPS is organized into 3 major sections:

Section A includes questions about services, number of visits, staffing and budgets from all facilities/units/organizations whose primary mission is to provide healthcare (medical and mental health services) or health promotion to students.

Section B collects information about the built environment and institution-wide policies and services.
Section C (rotating module) collects more in-depth information on a particular topic relevant to campus health and student success on a rotating schedule. In AY 2024-2025, information about integrated primary health and behavioral health services was collected. In AY 2025-2026, information on sexual health programs and services (questions that were part of the Sexual Health Services Survey (SHSS) in the past) will be collected.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "ACADEMIC YEAR"?

Academic year (AY) means a full 12-month period spanning approximately July 1 through June 30, which may align with your institution's fiscal year. (e.g., AY 2025-2026 = July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026). The specific dates are less important than consistency: all reported data - including budgets or expenses, visit and patient counts, and FTEs - should reflect the same 12-month period.

Access & Completing the IPS

I CANNOT FIND THE LINK TO OUR SCHOOL'S IPS. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

The school-specific IPS link is emailed to the representative for your institution (RMI) or the "survey contact" (if one is designated for your institution) after Labor Day each year (generally around Sept. 10th). If you do not know who your RMI is, please click here for the membership directory. The link can only be sent to one person and is sent from surveys@acha.org – please be sure to mark this email address as a safe sender. If your RMI or survey contact has not received the IPS link, please contact ktanabe@acha.org.

CAN MULTIPLE PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO THE QUALTRICS SURVEY LINK TO COMPLETE SIMULTANEOUSLY?

The survey link is school-specific and is sent to one contact person for each school. Because every question in the IPS is required and you can't easily jump between sections, we recommend that you use the fillable PDF worksheet to gather information from all relevant sources across campus. Once all the information is collected, one person should enter it into Qualtrics and submit the survey on behalf of the school.

CAN I SAVE MY PROGRESS AND RETURN TO THE IPS LATER?

Yes, the survey automatically saves your responses, allowing you to leave and return later. Caution: Using your browser's Back button reloads last year's pre-populated multiple-choice responses, overwriting any changes you made for the current academic year. Before moving to the next page, double-check that all entries on the page are still correct.

To avoid this issue altogether, we recommend using the fillable PDF worksheet to gather your information first, then entering everything into the Qualtrics survey in one sitting.

CAN I GO BACK AND CHANGE MY RESPONSES?

While you are in Parts A and B of the IPS, you can use the Back button to change your response. However, please note that once you continue to Part C, you will NOT be able to return to Sections A and B. Also, please use caution when using the Back button. Pre-populated multiple-choice questions (if you completed last year's IPS) are re-loaded when the page refreshes, so any changes you made for the current academic year will be lost and need to be re-entered. If you do use the Back button, please carefully double check that all values entered on the page are correct before proceeding to the next page of the survey. This is another reason why we recommend using the fillable PDF worksheet to collect your information and only use the Qualtrics link when you are ready to submit the entire IPS.

I COMPLETED THE IPS LAST YEAR, BUT DO NOT SEE MY RESPONSES FROM LAST YEAR PRE-FILLED IN THE PDF WORKSHEET.

The fillable PDF worksheet available on the ACHA website will not have your responses from last year. If you do not have a copy of your last year's submission, please email ktanabe@acha.org. However, in Qualtrics, the numeric data from last year will be available side by side with current year's data and single-select multiple-choice questions will be pre-selected with last year's response. Please carefully double check that all selections are correct for the current academic year.

WHEN IS THE IPS DUE?

The IPS is due on December 31st. We cannot accept late submissions.

Questions and Reporting Guidance

I'M UNSURE ABOUT THE MEANING OF A PARTICULAR WORD OR PHRASE IN THE IPS.

Throughout the survey, terms in blue with a dotted underline have definitions built-in. Hover over a term to view its definition in a pop-up box. For a full list, you can also download the definitions page from our website.

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT FTE'S, ARE YOU ASKING FOR THE NUMBER OF FILLED POSITIONS OR THE NUMBER OF BUDGETED POSITIONS AT THE START OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR?

We are looking for the number of budgeted positions at the start of the academic year.

Do I have to answer every question?

Yes, all questions are required. However, we do employ skip logic throughout the survey, so not every question will be visible to everyone.

What should I enter if my institution does not know the answer to a numeric question?

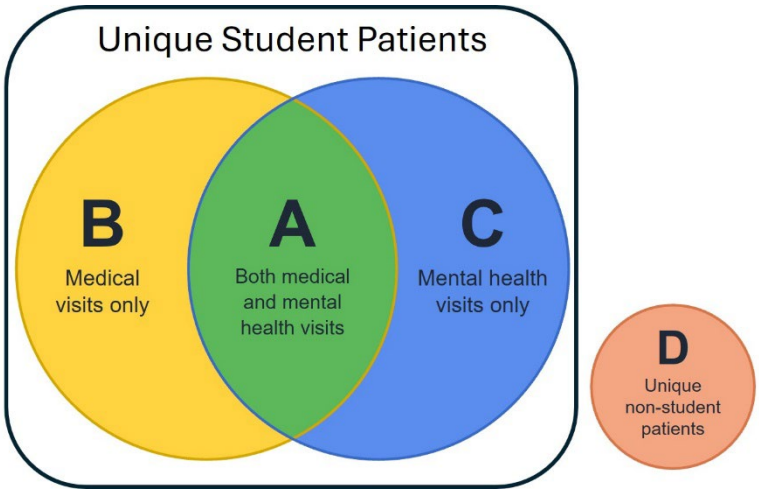
Please read the instructions for each section – generally we ask that use '-9' (negative nine) to let us know when the value is unknown. However, for certain questions, we ask that you use '0' (zero) for unknown values so that it does not affect the totals/sums that are automatically calculated by Qualtrics.

For questions 6A and 6B, what do you mean by patient visits (question 6A) and unique patients (question 6B)?

For Question 6A, please enter the total number of clinical visits for in-person and/or telehealth visits for medical, mental health, and non-student visits.

For Question 6B, please enter the number of unique patients with at least one clinical visit (in-person or telehealth) during the academic year. Please note that the number of unique patients should be LESS than the number of total visits (for medical, mental health and non-students).

Question 6B, Row A asks for the number of unique student patients for medical AND/OR mental health visits after accounting for any overlap between the 2 services. For example, if you have 5000 unique student patients for medical services (Row B) and 2000 unique student patients for mental health/counseling services (Row C), Row A should be less than 5000 + 2000 = 7000 unique students since it is unlikely that there is no overlap between medical and mental health unique student patients. If you are unable to provide this number in Row A, please enter negative 9 ('-9') for that row.



Our student health and counseling services are comprised of two separate departments with different policies. How should I answer questions about policies?

Our goal is to reflect the experiences and opportunities available to most students; limited resources prevent us from capturing every campus-specific nuance. Please select the response that best represents the services typically provided on your campus, such as the service used by the most students (e.g., the service that sees a higher volume of students).

Still have questions?

If you cannot find the answer to your question in this FAQ, please contact Kawai at ktanabe@acha.org for assistance.