DATA ENTRY BEST PRACTICES

Reliable and accurate data are the best tool to ensure that decision-making is informed by the evidence that supports the most effective practices.

The quality of any data is highly dependent on careful and consistent data entry.

- Create a data dictionary with information for each field and its valid values
- Follow the data dictionary rules and only enter valid values
- Do not overwrite fields, unless it is to correct erroneous information
- Use a standard code for missing values (e.g., -999, NULL) instead of leaving empty cells
- Use a standard code for not applicable values (e.g., -888, NA) instead of leaving empty cells
- Establish consistent procedures for data entry, storage, extraction, analysis, and reporting
- Keep a log of errors and difficulties and share for remediation
- Create a practice of validating the data that has been entered regularly throughout the day
- Automate validation rules to check for errors and inconsistencies