

Weekly Tip for Dec. 1, 2020

Populating AVAL and AVALC in an ADaM BDS

Section 3.3.4.2 of the ADaM Implementation Guide (ADaMIG) v1.2 states the following:

“For most parameters, only AVAL or AVALC will be populated, not both. That both --STRESC and --STRESN are present and populated in SDTM Findings class domains does not imply that both AVAL and AVALC must be present and populated in BDS datasets. AVAL and AVALC have a different purpose than --STRESN and --STRESC. For example, for parameters corresponding to numeric tests in SDTM Findings class domains, it is not recommended to copy SDTM --STRESC into AVALC, because there is no analysis need for a character value. Further, doing so may result in breaking the one-to-one mapping requirement in some cases. If it is desired for traceability or listing purposes to bring the value of --STRESC into the ADaM dataset, the variable --STRESC may be copied as is without renaming it.”

In summary, AVALC should only be populated if the parameter described on the record contains results that are inherently character. Urine color and appearance are examples of such parameters. The only time both AVAL and AVALC should be populated on the same record is when there is code/decode relationship between them. For example, a questionnaire item may contain responses that are coded for analysis, but where the code is associated with a text value (e.g., 1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent). In that case, AVALC provides additional information regarding AVAL, and there is a one-to-one mapping between them, so it's okay to populate both variables.

This week's tip was contributed by Nancy Brucken. Nancy is a Standards Engineer at Clinical Solutions Group, Inc., and has been a member of the ADaM team since 2011, co-leading the ADQRS sub-team, and currently working with the COVID-19 sub-team.