

Responding to NHS Hospitals Data and Datasets consultation

Background:

On 22 July 2013, NHS England and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (H&SCIC) published their consultation '**NHS Hospital Data and Datasets: A consultation**'.¹ The consultation seeks views on the future of hospital data collection to inform the development of the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) system.

This consultation is an **important opportunity to emphasise the current lack of musculoskeletal outpatient clinical data being routinely collected in Hospital Episode Statistics (HES)**, and to suggest improvements to data collection. In future, HES data will be incorporated in the new Care Episodes Service (CES) as part of the **care.data** programme. To drive improvements in patient care for musculoskeletal conditions, it is important to ensure that MSK outpatient data is included in CES and available to health commissioners, researchers, health charities and patients.

- Responses can be submitted through the on-line survey at: <https://consultations.infostandards.org/nhs-england/hes/consultation/intro/view>
- Respondents can choose to complete the full questionnaire, to answer specific sections, or to add general comments. We would be grateful if you could respond to questions 9 and 12.
- Alternatively, written responses can be e-mailed to england.cdo@nhs.net. We have suggested some key points to make below.

The closing date for consultation is **16 September 2013**.

Overview of consultation:

The key questions the consultation seeks to answer are:

- What data sets do citizens and commissioners require in order to know whether a hospital is providing safe, efficient, and equitable care?
- Which specific data items should the Health and Social Care Information Centre extract from hospitals' electronic systems and make available to citizens, providers, regulators, and researchers?
- How can we support hospitals to provide more complete data sets while minimising the burden of data collections on frontline staff?

At the end of the consultation period NHS England and the H&SCIC will analyse the responses received and then **hold a series of stakeholder events**. This process will culminate in **publication of a technical specification of the new data set that hospitals will be required to supply, starting in April 2014**.

Key points to make:

- **MSK health is a data poor area:** MSK conditions constitute the 4th largest NHS programme budget. However, HES currently captures very little data about MSK outpatients' appointments. Data is collected about new and follow-up outpatient appointments, but not about patients' conditions and treatments including anti-TNF therapy. This is a missed opportunity. *Please stress the need to capture clinical data about Rheumatology and Orthopaedic outpatients' conditions and treatments in HES data.*
- **Understanding the health status of patients using outpatient services:** MSK conditions cause substantial morbidity. More data is needed to understand the impact of treatments including referrals for physiotherapy and to demonstrate the value of services to commissioners.

¹ <http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/hosp-data-consult.pdf>

If HES routinely captured more MSK data about patients, we could understand more about hospital departments' case-mix, impact on the Multi-Disciplinary Team, and future likely needs.

- **An opportunity for health commissioners, researchers and patients to understand more about MSK health:** HES data will be incorporated into the new care.data database, alongside other data sources. It is vital that more granular MSK health data is included and made available for use by health commissioners, researchers, health charities, patients and the general public.

Responding to the on-line questionnaire:

Please respond to questions nine and twelve

Many of the questions in the on-line survey are directed at people's individual knowledge or local experience of HES data collection. However, there are opportunities to include more general comments. We suggest that the following are included:

- **Section 4: Data not currently recorded or submitted.**

This section states "Many of the world's leading healthcare systems record and submit large amounts of information that is not currently present in HES. We want to improve our coverage but need to understand the difficulties extending data collection would present."

***Question 9** relates to **outpatient** data: In the free text box "Please indicate other items and/or provide additional comments here" please stress the need to collect data about patients' conditions and treatments in data-poor areas such as Rheumatology and Orthopaedic outpatient appointments in HES.*

- **Section 6: Overall priority**

This section states "Bearing in mind issues such as burden, complexity and impact on patient safety, please select the items that you think should be the highest priority for the NHS to begin collecting for use in HES, starting in April 2014 (pick 3 for each care setting)."

***Question 12** relates to **overall priorities**: please stress the importance of collecting data about patients' conditions and treatments in data-poor areas such as Rheumatology and Orthopaedic outpatient appointments in HES.*