



# Statistics on Public Health: Consultation Response 2025

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## About Statistics on Public Health

The Statistics for Public Health publication presents statistics relating to alcohol use, drug use, obesity and smoking. Topics covered include hospital admissions, mortality, prescribed items and affordability and expenditure. The latest Statistics on Public Health publication can be found at <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/statistics-on-public-health/2023>.

## Introduction

The consultation was open for six weeks from Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July to Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025 following the rationale and proposals described in the section below. This document then goes on to document the responses received and explain the decisions made and next steps.

## Rationale and Proposals

The health and social care statistical outputs consultation, ran from 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024, and sought feedback on a range of proposed changes to health and social care publications produced by a number of agencies, including NHS England (NHSE), the [Office for Health Improvement and Disparities](#) (OHID) and [NHS Business Services Authority](#) (NHSBSA). A link to this consultation can be found at [Health and social care statistical outputs - GOV.UK](#)

The consultation was driven by the principles of the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#), including Principle V5.1 which details that opportunities for data sharing, data linkage, cross-analysis of sources and the reuse of data should be taken wherever feasible. Topic 15 (Smoking, drugs and alcohol) acknowledged that consolidation of statistics had already been considered, including the formation of the Statistics on Public Health publication ([Lifestyles compendia consultation document.pdf](#)).

This consultation proposed further consolidation of the Statistics for Public Health publication. At present, statistics on admissions for alcohol use are signposted to OHID's [Local Area Profiles for England](#). It is intended to signpost further sections of the publication to other existing publications where the same data and analysis is presented. This would provide the benefits of ensuring that analysis is presented alongside complementary information (enabling greater bench marking), is produced by subject matter experts using the most relevant and up to date data and minimises burden on resources by reducing duplication. In addition, during the health and social care statistical outputs consultation feedback on proposed changes to the Statistics of Public Health publication were positive and supported a move towards more signposting to existing outputs.

If the proposals below are accepted the current Statistics for Public Health publication would only include the signposting page (Part 5) that would also include signposting and guidance to the new data sources described below. It would also cease to be an Accredited Official Statistic (National Statistic).

### Proposal 1 - Hospital admissions statistics - migration to OHID

It was proposed that outputs relating to hospital admissions for drug use, obesity and smoking are migrated to the [Office for Health Improvement and Disparities \(OHID\)](#). OHID are already responsible for producing alcohol related hospital admissions, which are published on their [Fingertips](#) site. OHID recently asked stakeholders to comment on a proposal to migrate obesity related hospital admissions to Fingertips so it would be beneficial to users to have all

admissions statistics available on a single platform, alongside other key statistics for each public health area (alcohol, drugs, obesity and smoking).

The table below provides a top-level summary of the admissions data outputs provided in the Statistics on Public Health publication and through OHID's Fingertips profile (alcohol only).

	Statistics on Public Health	OHID Fingertips profile
Data source	Hospital Episodes Statistics (HES)	Hospital Episodes Statistics (HES)
Frequency of update	Annual	Annual
Latest data published	2022/23	2023/24 (alcohol)
Granularity (alcohol)	England, region, Local authorities, Integrated Care Boards	England (Local authority data available in Local Authority Health profiles)

Post migration, it was proposed that the admissions section of the Statistics on Public Health webpage would provide signposting to the relevant areas of Fingertips.

Smoking related admissions (sourced from NHS England) are also published by OHID on their [Fingertips](#) site but are currently paused while OHID review the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the methodology. OHID expect to restart publishing smoking related admissions in 2025/26.

### Proposal 2 - Deaths from Smoking - migration to OHID

It was proposed that outputs relating to deaths caused by and attributable to smoking are migrated to [Office for Health Improvement and Disparities \(OHID\)](#). OHID already provide statistics on alcohol-related mortality and deaths from drug misuse on the [Mortality Profile | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#). As for the Statistics on Public Health smoking mortality outputs, deaths data for the Mortality Profile is sourced from the Office for National Statistics.

The review OHID are conducting for smoking related admissions also covers smoking related mortality. By migrating to responsibility for production of smoking death statistics to OHID, any such methodological change can be implemented to the statistics in the timeliest manner. This conforms to principle Q2 (Sound methods) of the Code of Practice for Statistics - producers of statistics and data should use the best available methods.

Post migration, it is proposed that the Smoking-related mortality section of the Statistics on Public Health webpage would provide signposting to the relevant areas of Fingertips.

### Proposal 3 - Lifestyle-related prescriptions - migration to NHSBSA

It was proposed that production of prescription analysis outputs is migrated to [NHSBSA](#). As part of their role, NHSBSA provide platforms, delivery services and reporting for NHS

prescription services, as such provide expertise on prescribing data. Their ePACT2 platform is used to extract the prescriptions data used within the Statistics for Public Health publication.

NHSBSA already produce annual ([Prescription Cost Analysis - England | NHSBSA](#)) and monthly ([Prescription Cost Analysis \(PCA\) Monthly Administrative Data](#)) reporting which includes breakdowns for alcohol dependence, gastro-intestinal anti-obesity drugs and nicotine dependence. This proposal would therefore, with the provision of monthly reporting, provide users with more timely data, and directly remove duplication of and burden on resources.

The table below provides a top-level comparison of the publications:

	<b>Statistics on Public Health</b>	<b>NHSBSA Prescription Cost Analysis - annual</b>	<b>NHSBSA Prescription Cost Analysis Monthly Administrative Data</b>
Data source	NHSBSA	NHSBSA	NHSBSA
Accreditation	Official statistics	Official statistics	Management information
Frequency of update	Annual	Annual	Monthly
Latest data published	2022/23 (financial year)	2023/24 (financial year and calendar year)	March 2025
Granularity - geography	England, Commissioning regions, Integrated Care Boards	England, Commissioning regions <sup>1</sup> , Integrated Care Boards	England, Integrated Care Boards
Granularity - data	Items prescribed	Items dispensed	Items dispensed

As noted above, a key difference between the Statistics on Public Health and NHSBSA publications is that the former presents data by items prescribed, whilst NHSBSA reporting is presented by items dispensed. There is also a difference in the geographies that are presented in the NHSBSA publications. The given geography is that of the dispensing contractor for the prescription item, rather than the prescribing practice or organisation as shown in the Statistics on Public Health. The [consultation document](#) includes a download that quantifies these (relatively small) differences at Integrated Care Board (ICB) level for alcohol, obesity and smoking related prescriptions.

Post migration, it is proposed that the Lifestyle-related prescriptions section of the Statistics on Public Health webpage would provide signposting to the relevant publication areas on the NHSBSA website, along with guidance on how to find data relating to alcohol, obesity and smoking prescriptions.

<sup>1</sup> Will be included from 2024/25 onwards.

## Proposal 4 - Affordability and expenditure - migration to OHID

It was proposed that outputs relating to Affordability and Expenditure on alcohol and tobacco are migrated to [Office for Health Improvement and Disparities \(OHID\)](#). The analysis presented within this section is based on economic data from the Office for National Statistics.

Post migration, the Affordability and expenditure section on the Statistics on Public Health webpage will provide signposting to the relevant area on the OHID website.

## Methodology for consultation

A form was created with the following 13 questions that were agreed between NHS England, OHID and NHSBSA.

**Q1.** What sector do you work in? (if you work across more than one sector, please choose your main sector).

Choices taken from: DHSC, Government Partners, Local Authority, Member of the public, NHS England, NHS Organisation, Royal College, Third Sector Organisation or Other

**Q2.** Are you happy with Proposal 1 to migrate the production of the Hospital admissions statistics to OHID's Fingertips tool?

Choices taken from: Yes or No

**Q3.** (*a follow-up question for a No answer*): Please provide a reason why you don't agree with this proposal (this is really helpful for us to assess the impacts of the change on users).

Free text responses.

**Q4.** Are you happy with Proposal 2 to migrate the production of the Deaths from Smoking statistics to OHID's Fingertips tool?

Choices taken from: Yes or No

**Q5.** (*a follow-up question for a No answer*): Please provide a reason why you don't agree with this proposal (this is really helpful for us to assess the impacts of the change on users).

Free text responses.

**Q6.** Are you happy with Proposal 3 to migrate the production of the Lifestyle-related prescriptions statistics to NHSBSA?

Choices taken from: Yes or No

**Q7.** (*a follow-up question for a No answer*): Please provide a reason why you don't agree with this proposal (this is really helpful for us to assess the impacts of the change on users).

Free text responses.

**Q8.** Are you happy with Proposal 4 to migrate the production of the Affordability and expenditure statistics to OHID's Fingertips tool?

Choices taken from: Yes or No

**Q9.** (*a follow-up question for a No answer*): Please provide a reason why you don't agree with this proposal (this is really helpful for us to assess the impacts of the change on users).

Free text responses.

**Q10.** The SoPH publication will provide signposting links to the new locations for the information. Should it also include guidance on how to access the new information source and how it differs from the information being signposted?

Choices taken from: Yes or No

**Q11.** *(a follow-up question for a Yes answer):* How long should the signposting and information source be maintained in the publication?

Choices taken from: 6 months, 1 year, 2 years or Other.

**Q12.** Please add any further comments you would like to feed into this consultation below.

Free text responses.

**Q13.** If you would be happy for us to contact you if we need any further information on your comments please enter your email address below.

Free text responses.

To support the form a web page was also created with further details and is available [here](#) and a mailbox was available to post any further questions that people had as the consultation was in progress.

The consultation was promoted using a prominent note added to both the [publication](#) and [series](#) pages.

Interested parties were also targeted by contacting over 40 members of the United Kingdom Health Statistics Steering Group (UKHSSG) combined Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol Theme Group. In addition, notes were sent to the StatsUserNetwork and Health Statistics User Group community on AnalystX.

Halfway through the consultation period a reminder was sent out to encourage more responses.

Colleagues from NHS England, NHSBSA and OHID that were involved with developing the consultation did not complete the survey as their support was implied.

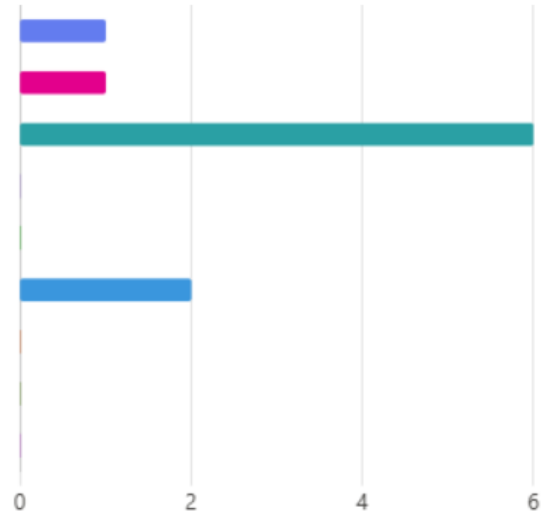
By the end of Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> August, a total of ten responses had been received, and these are described in the section below.

## Results

The responses to the consultation questions are provided below.

1. What sector do you work in? (if you work across more than one sector, please choose your main sector).

● DHSC	1
● Government Partners	1
● Local Authority	6
● Member of the public	0
● NHS England	0
● NHS Organisation	2
● Royal College	0
● Third Sector Organisation	0
● Other	0



2. Are you happy with Proposal 1 to migrate the production of the Hospital admissions statistics to OHID's Fingertips too [?]

● Yes	10
● No	0



There was no need for the follow up question as there were no answers "No".

4. Are you happy with Proposal 2 to migrate the production of the Deaths from Smoking statistics to OHID's Fingertips tool?

- Yes 10
- No 0



There was no need for the follow up question as there were no answers "No".

6. Are you happy with Proposal 3 to migrate the production of the Lifestyle-related prescriptions statistics to NHSBSA?

- Yes 10
- No 0



There was no need for the follow up question as there were no answers "No".

8. Are you happy with Proposal 4 to migrate the production of the Affordability and expenditure statistics to OHID's Fingertips tool?

- Yes 10
- No 0



There was no need for the follow up question as there were no answers "No".

10. The SoPH publication will provide signposting links to the new locations for the information. Should it also include guidance on how to access the new information source and how it differs from the information being signposted?

- Yes 10
- No 0



11. How long should the signposting and information source be maintained in the publication?

- 6 months 0
- 1 year 5
- 2 years 4
- Other 0



Question 12 asked for further comments and three were received and have been responded to where possible. The first two have a similar perceive on reporting geographies:

**From a Local Authority:** *“It would be useful if data below LA could be included. Possibly using the future INT<sup>2</sup> geographies.”*

**From a Local Authority:** *“Please consider using relevant geographies where possible, which will support LA analysis (LSOA, MSOA, newly established INT boundaries or wards would be most helpful) or alternatively make postcode and/or IMD available for proxy analysis.”*

**Response:** As user requirements for tools external to NHS England we have forwarded to both OHID and NHSBSA for consideration as part of potential future development such as this would be implemented.

**From DHSC:** *“Has the OHID data transition timing (where OHID products hosted on UKHSA infrastructure will be moving to another platform and potentially a different cut of NHS-E data sources like HES) been considered that potentially the fingertip figures will need to be updated and time series data updated to align with new data sources? Which cut of HES is currently used for the Statistics on Public Health figures.”*

<sup>2</sup> Integrated Neighbourhood Team

**Response:** We have put the questioner in direct touch with the relevant people within OHID to be able to address this question.

The Statistics on Public Health figures published by NHS England are taken directly from Annual Refresh data in the original version of HES.

## Outcome

Reflecting on the responses received all the proposals made have been accepted. The publication will become a signposting publication only and will no longer be an Accredited Official Statistic.

We will maintain the signposting publication for a period ending in December 2026.

## Next Steps

The proposed next steps will be:

### Immediately

- Inform the OSR of the change and formally remove the Accredited Official Statistic accreditation from the publication.
- This document will be attached to the consultation page, as well as the series and all publication pages. We will also circulate to the interested parties that were initially notified about the consultation, and notes will again be shared with StatsUserNetwork and AnalystX.

### Next 3 months

- A final SoPH publication will be created and drafted using the current Part 5 page as a template. Content will be added to signpost users to the new data locations with description on how to access them.
- Stakeholders in OHID and NHSBSA will be informed when the publication is ready for review and checking prior to publication.
- We hope to have this new version live from autumn this year.
- Our generic mailbox ([lifestyles@nhs.net](mailto:lifestyles@nhs.net)) will be monitored for feedback from users on the new look publication.

### Future

- Adhoc changes to the publication will be made on a case-by-case basis, for example, if details of the publications produced by OHID or NHSBSA change.
- On a quarterly basis we will check links published are still working.
- On a half-yearly basis, we will assess web traffic from the publication and review feedback and questions received into the generic mailbox ([lifestyles@nhs.net](mailto:lifestyles@nhs.net)) and make any relevant updates to the web pages. (Any urgent changes will be made immediately.)