

# September Letter 2024

30 September 2024

**To: Directors of Adult Social Services & contacts for national data collections**


Dear Colleague,

NHS England issues a letter in September each year to the 153 Local Authorities with Adult Social Care (ASC) responsibilities in England to provide information on the mandated national adult social care data returns.

This letter provides information and deadlines for the 2024-25 mandated adult social care data which will be submitted to NHS England in 2025 and subsequently published by NHS England or the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC). For the 2024-25 mandated ASC collections there are no changes to be announced (please see Table A – Collection Changes). The key dates for the 2024-25 mandated ASC collections are outlined under Table B.

The completion of these mandated data returns is fully endorsed by the Adult Social Care Data and Outcomes Board (ASC-DOB) which comprises of representatives from DHSC, NHS England, Care Quality Commission (CQC), the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Local Government Association (LGA). ASC-DOB is the official sub-board of the [Data Alliance Partnership Board](#) (DAPB) which provides oversight of the assurance and approval of information standards, data collections and data extractions across health and adult social care. All mandated data requirements are included in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) [Single Data List](#) and the Secretary of State Direction for Adult Social Care collections and associated Data Provision Notice. CQC use data from these mandated collections as part of their evidence requirements for Local Authority Assurance in conjunction with other evidence requirements. It is also important to note that non-compliance compromises the Local Authority assessment process and may require CQC to request additional information as a consequence.

As usual, details of any local authorities who fail to comply fully with the mandated requirements within the agreed deadline will be highlighted within the published reports and named in briefing submissions to DHSC Ministers and relevant Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) notified. It is important to be transparent about the completeness and quality of such collections, to ensure data users are fully aware of its caveats.

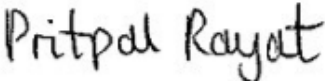


I draw your attention to the Additional Information items at the end of this letter. These are not directly related to the mandated collection requirements but provide information on important developments such as ASC Client Level Data (CLD), the Health and Care Statistics consultation, among others.

Please ensure that colleagues who need to act on the content of this letter have sight of it.

If you have any queries on the content of this letter, or any general queries, please contact us at [enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk) for the attention of the Adult Social Care Statistics team.

Yours faithfully,



Pritpal Rayat  
Head of Adult Social Care Data Products & Developments  
NHS England

## Sector Support

Key stakeholders within the adult social care setting such as DHSC, ADASS and LGA, are grateful to local authorities for their continued co-operation in submitting timely and high-quality information which will help:

- improve the quality and outcomes of care for our service users and their carers
- demonstrate transparency
- enable benchmarking
- inform government policy decisions

The sector continues to support the work carried out by NHS England in the collection and provision of these valuable information resources for adult social care in England.

We would also welcome further input from anyone who has suggestions on how we can better support your work in the provision of these mandated collections.

## Publication of 2023-24 Collections

Details of the publication dates for the 2023-24 reports, for which data is already collected, can be found on the NHS England publication calendar<sup>1</sup>. Data already published can be found on the ASC Data Hub<sup>2</sup>.

Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE)	27 June 2024
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)	22 August 2024
Guardianship under the Mental Health Act 1983	22 August 2024
Safeguarding Adults Collection (SAC)	29 August 2024
Adult Social Care Survey (ASCS)	31 October 2024
Adult Social Care Activity and Finance (SALT & ASC-FR)	31 October 2024
Deferred Payment Agreements (DPA)	31 October 2024
Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)	19 December 2024

<sup>1</sup> <https://digital.nhs.uk/search/document-type/publication?sort=date&area=data>

<sup>2</sup> <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-tools-and-services/data-services/adult-social-care-data-hub>

## 2024-25 Collections (to be submitted in 2025)

### Upcoming changes to collections

This letter announces reporting changes to the adult social care collections. For the 2024-25 collections there are no changes to be made.

### Table A – Collection Changes

Collection Name	Table Affected	Change to Collection	Mandatory/ Voluntary/ Removal	Previously Announced
No changes				

### Submission dates

Local authorities must submit **a complete and fully validated** return by the mandated submission deadline (Table B).

Submission by the mandated submission deadline is key to enhancing the quality and completeness of the returns, and providing additional support to local authorities (where appropriate) to address any issues and improve data quality. Validation reports will be provided following each submission made before the mandated deadline.

The refresh submission period after the mandated deadline, provides local authorities the opportunity to address any data quality issues identified with the initial mandated submission.

**Please note: no further updates will be accepted beyond the refresh submission deadline.**

If for any reason, you will be unable to provide a complete submission by the mandated submission deadline then please contact us as soon as possible so that we can support you with your submission; this contextual information will also be collated and published within the associated data quality report.

### Table B – Key collection dates (2025)

Collection Name	Collection open date	Mandated Submission Deadline	Validation / DQ reports available	Refresh Submission Deadline	Provisional Publication Date
Safeguarding Adults Collection (SAC)	2 Apr	4 Jun	18 Jun	2 Jul	Aug 2025
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)	2 Apr	14 May	28 May	18 Jun	Aug 2025
Adult Social Care Survey (ASCS)	2 Apr	7 May	21 May	11 Jun	Sep 2025

<b>Adult Social Care Finance Return (ASC-FR)</b>	21 May	2 Jul	16 Jul	13 Aug	Oct 2025
<b>Deferred Payment Agreements (DPA)</b>	21 May	2 Jul	16 Jul	13 Aug	Oct 2025
<b>Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set<sup>1</sup> (ASC-WDS)</b>	8 Sep	10 Oct	-	-	12 Feb 2026

<sup>1</sup> This data is submitted to and published by Skills for Care.

The ASCOF publication (which combines data from a number of sources) has a provisional publication date of December 2025.

## Collection open date

This is when the window will open to allow submissions to commence. All NHS England collections in 2025 are planned to be submitted via NHS England's Strategic Data Collection System<sup>3</sup> (SDCS). Further information and guidance will be provided to our key contacts for each collection prior to this date, should your key contact change please inform us via [enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk).

Submissions will be accepted once the window opens, and local authorities are able to submit as many times as needed during the window to improve the quality and completeness of their data. We would recommend early and multiple submissions during the mandated submission window.

## Mandated Submission Deadline

This is the mandated deadline for all local authorities to submit all their **fully completed, checked and final mandated data** to NHS England (via SDCS), the collection submission window will close at **5:00pm**. **Please note:** support is not available outside normal office hours.

**We will work with Partners in Care and Health<sup>4</sup> to notify the DASS where a local authority has failed to submit by the mandated submission deadline.** They will also be named within the data quality section of the associated official statistics publication and named in briefing submissions to DHSC Ministers. We will also be unable to provide additional support to improve the quality and completeness of the submission.


Local authorities are encouraged to submit within the submission window, those who submitted prior to the closure of the mandated submission window for previous collections received additional support which was well received.

## Validation reports and data quality support available

Upon submission of the mandated data and closure of the submission window, an overview validation report will be provided that local authorities can utilise to improve the quality and completeness of their submission. We will aim to provide this within 5 working days of submission.

<sup>3</sup> <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/strategic-data-collection-service-sdcs/content>

<sup>4</sup> The Local Government Association (LGA) and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) are Partners in Care and Health (PCH) <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/partners-care-and-health>



In addition, support will be provided available to local authorities throughout the mandated submission window to improve the quality and completeness of the submitted data.

## Refresh Submission Deadline

Following the Mandated Submission Deadline the submission window will re-open to allow re-submissions (via SDCS), should these be required. The refresh submission window will also close at **5:00pm**.

Once the refresh submission window has closed there will be **no** further opportunities to resubmit. The mandated deadline for all data submissions is the date provided within the **Mandated Submission Deadline** column for each collection; the Refresh Submission Deadline is an opportunity for local authorities to re-submit should this be required. **Local authorities who miss the mandated deadline but submit during the refresh window will still be named as failing to meet the mandated deadline.**

## 2025-26 data (to be submitted in 2026)

Following on from consultation with local authorities and national bodies, there are currently no confirmed recording or reporting changes to the data items for the mandated 2025-26 data collections.

Reporting changes for the current suite of data collections for 2025-26 could still be required and local authorities would be advised of this in next year's September Letter and associated Data Provision Notice, following approval via the working groups and the full assurance process.

## Additional information


Included here for information and transparency, relating to:

### ASC Client Level Data (CLD)

The first full year of quarterly submissions for the mandatory Adult CLD collection have been received and will replace Short and Long Term (SALT) data in the 2025 Activity & Finance report and ASCOF publication.

Information on the Adult Social Care CLD collection is available on a dedicated CLD website [hosted by Arden & Gem](#) as well as the [NHSE Data Product Page](#). All the resources needed for the collection including the latest specification, guidance, onboarding instructions and support materials can be found on this site.

We plan to make minor changes to the specification and guidance to improve consistency of reporting across local authorities. We are consulting with local authorities via the CLD reference group on proposed changes and plan to publish the updated specification and collection guidance in October 2024 to be implemented from April 2025. Changes to the specification will be formally managed by NHS England in conjunction with DHSC to ensure such changes are aligned with the Direction.



If you require any guidance regarding submitting data or having access to the data, please email: [agem.adultsocialcare@nhs.net](mailto:agem.adultsocialcare@nhs.net).

## Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) Review

As highlighted in the 2023 September letter, DHSC has been undertaking work with key stakeholders to explore potential revisions and enhancements to the existing ASCOF. This framework now has 6 new objectives that set out DHSC's priority outcomes for care and support that replace the previous four domains. A full description of the changes can be found in the draft Handbook of Definitions. In December 2024, DHSC will be publishing an update to the Handbook of Definitions. This update will provide information on the development of metrics sourced from CLD.

DHSC will continue to engage with stakeholders as part of any further reform of ASCOF. DHSC intend for future reform to fully utilise new data streams coming online over the next few years, such as updates to the Adult Social Care Survey (ASCS) and Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE) and will ensure ASCOF reflects changes being delivered across the sector as a result of reform.

## CQC Local Authority Assessments

CQC commenced formal Local Authority assessments in 2023, following a pilot of the approach (see <https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/local-authorities/introducing-assessments>). CQC has included a range of metrics from the mandated collections set out in this letter as evidence, in conjunction with other evidence sources. The assessment framework detailing evidence requirements can be found here:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/local-authorities/assessment-framework>

## Data Alliance Partnership Board assurance

During some years a cohort of local authorities are required to participate in a burden assessment exercise of a selection of the adult social care collections, which contributes to the information given to the Data Alliance Partnership Board to allow them to approve and assure the Adult Social Care data collections. There were no assessments conducted in the previous year, but it is expected that this exercise will be undertaken for ASCS, SACE, ASC-FR and SAC in the coming year.

## Health and Care Statistics Consultation

DHSC, ONS, NHS England and NHSBSA and UKHSA were all involved in conducting a user consultation between December 2023 and March 2024 on all of its existing health and statistical products. One of the chapters in this consultation focused on Adult Social Care statistical products. Further information is available here [Health and social care statistical outputs published by DHSC \(including OHID\), NHSBSA, UKHSA, ONS and NHS England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). Feedback to the consultation is still being considered and the outcome report is anticipated to be published in late 2024.



## Short and Long Term (SALT) Cessation

CLD has been mandated and first annual set of returns have been submitted for 2023-24. One year of dual running with SALT was agreed with the sector for 2023-24, following which the collection has now ceased. It is the intention that all key statistics collected in SALT will be derived from CLD in future. To note this change in data source (SALT to CLD) could mean discontinuities in their reporting and consequent benchmarking.

## Office for Local Government (Oflog) – Local Authority Data Explorer

Oflog is a newly established local government performance body in England. Oflog's aim is to provide authoritative and accessible data and analysis about the performance of local government and support its improvement. Oflog have released a new online tool which brings together a selection of existing metrics across a subset of service areas for data that is available at different levels of local authority, including Adult Social Care; Local Authority Data Explorer.

## Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS)

Skills for Care are commissioned to collect data and produce insights about the staff employed (directly and indirectly) by adult social services departments in local authorities in England. Topics covered include: the size of the workforce, employment overview, recruitment and retention, demographics, and pay information. Data is collected via a submission to the [Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set](#). Guidance to help with the completion of the return is [available from Skills for Care](#).

## Digitising Social Care

The digitising social care programme is funded by the department of health and social care (DHSC) and delivered by a joint NHS/DHSC team. We support the digital transformation of the adult social care sector, laying the foundations to improve the flow of data between health and care to deliver safer, more efficient, personalised care. One of our priority areas of focus has been to encourage CQC registered adult social care providers in England to adopt digital approaches to care planning by implementing a digital social care record (DSCR).

The clock is ticking for social care providers to access funding to implement a DSCR solution as this offer will be closing very soon. Providers should contact their local ICS digital leads for more information if they are interested, contact details for each region are [here](#).

You can find more information on the digitising social care programme on our [website](#). You can also email us on [england.adultsocialcare@nhs.net](mailto:england.adultsocialcare@nhs.net)