



Public Health  
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

# National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS)

## Core dataset Q

## Implementation guidance

DAPB0107 Amd 50/2021

# About Public Health England

Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-leading science, research, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care, and a distinct delivery organisation with operational autonomy. We provide government, local government, the NHS, Parliament, industry and the public with evidence-based professional, scientific and delivery expertise and support.

Public Health England  
Wellington House  
133-155 Waterloo Road  
London SE1 8UG  
Tel: 020 7654 8000  
[www.gov.uk/phe](http://www.gov.uk/phe)  
Twitter: @PHE\_uk  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland](https://www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland)

Prepared by: Paul Brand  
For queries relating to this document, please contact: [NDTMS.admin@phe.gov.uk](mailto:NDTMS.admin@phe.gov.uk)



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## Data Alliance Partnership Board

The Data Alliance Partnership Board (DAPB), which holds delegated authority from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, has approved this information standard for publication under [section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012](#).

Assurance that this information standard meets the requirements of the Act and is appropriate for the use specified in the specification document has been provided by the Data Standards Assurance Service (DSAS) and approved by the Data Alliance Partnership Board (DAPB).

This information standard comprises:

- Specification
- Change Request
- Implementation Guide

An Information Standards Notice (DAPB0107 Amd 50/2021) has been issued as a notification of use and implementation timescales. Please read this alongside the documents for the standard.

The controlled versions of these documents can be found on the [NHS Digital website](#). Any copies held outside of that area, in whatever format (e.g. paper, email attachment), are considered to have passed out of control and should be checked for currency and validity.

Date of publication: 30 September 2021

## Amendment history

Version	Date	Amendment history
0.1	20/07/2021	Draft for review
0.2	16/08/2021	Updated following feedback from NHSD

## Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Adult	Clients are deemed to be adults if they are aged 18 or over at presentation (triage).
Attributor	In NDTMS, the clients' two initials, date of birth, gender and local authority of residence are collectively used to identify an individual. Records relating to individual clients are isolated and linked on the basis of the attributor. This minimises the extent of multiple counting within the datasets.
Client	An adult or young person drug or alcohol user, presenting for treatment
DET	The Data Entry Tool (DET) is a system provided by NDTMS for treatment providers that do not have a clinical management system that is capable of producing NDTMS data.
DHSC	Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). DHSC is a ministerial department, supported by a number of agencies and partner organisations.
Episode	A period of contact with a treatment provider, from referral date to discharge incorporating a set of interventions with a specific care plan. A client may attend one or more interventions/modalities of treatment during the same episode of treatment. A client may also have more than one episode in a year. A client is considered to have been in contact during the year (and hence included in statistics) if any part of an episode occurs within the year. An episode occurs at a single NDTMS agency. A client may perceive his/her treatment as a single pathway of care made up of continuous treatment, however for statistical and performance reasons, NDTMS requires that the pathway of care be broken up into individual episodes of care by provider.
NDTMS	The National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS) captures data about structured drug and alcohol treatment in the community and in secure settings (including secure children's homes and IRCs). NDTMS also collect the Criminal Justice Interventions Team (CJIT) dataset which relates to pathways into treatment for criminal justice clients.
NDTMS V2	NDTMS V2 is an online portal provided and maintained for providers to use to submit their NDTMS data. Some providers who do not have an NDTMS compliant third party software system may also use the NDTMS V2 inbuilt data entry tool (DET) for their NDTMS data entry.
OHID	The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) will sit within DHSC, and will lead work across government to improve and level up

	the health of the nation by tackling obesity, improving mental health and promoting physical activity.
Public Health England (PHE)	Executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) that exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities.
Setting	The setting in which an intervention takes place, for example community, home or residential unit. The same client could be receiving the same intervention in more than one setting within the same episode.
Software supplier	Any third party case file management system provider with the functionality to output a csv file compliant with NDTMS data submission requirement For full details see <a href="http://gov.uk">gov.uk</a> .
Structured treatment	<p>Structured treatment follows assessment and is delivered according to a care plan, with clear goals, which are regularly reviewed with the client. It may comprise a number of concurrent or sequential specialist drug and alcohol focused interventions. It addresses multiple or more severe needs that would not be expected to respond, or have already not responded, to less intensive or non-specialist interventions alone. Structured treatment requires a comprehensive assessment of need, and is delivered according to a recovery care plan, which is regularly reviewed with the client. The plan sets out clear goals which include change to substance use, and how other client needs will be addressed in one or more of the following domains: physical and psychological health; criminal involvement and offending; and social functioning.</p> <p>All interventions must be delivered by appropriately trained and competent staff, within supervision and clinical governance structures. Structured drug and alcohol treatment provides integrated access to specialist medical assessment and intervention, and works jointly with mental and physical health services, and safeguarding and family support services according to need. In addition to pharmacological and psychosocial interventions provided as part of the key working or case management function of structured treatment, service users should be provided with the following, as appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• harm reduction advice and information</li> <li>• BBV screening and immunisation</li> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• appropriate access and referral to healthcare and health monitoring</li> <li>• crisis and risk management</li> </ul> <p>For a full definition of structured treatment see the <a href="#">NDTMS business definitions</a>.</p>
Treatment journey	A new treatment journey is defined if an individual's latest presentation fulfils all of the following criteria; an earlier episode is not still open, the discharge date in an earlier episode is not after the discharge date in a later episode and the difference between modality start date in the later episode and the discharge date in the earlier episode is greater than 3 weeks (21 days).
Treatment provider	A provider of services for the treatment of drug or alcohol misuse. The agency may be statutory (for example NHS) or non-statutory (for example third sector) and be providing structured or non-structured treatment. Each agency has an NDTMS agency code and there may be several NDTMS agencies at one location as per the requirements of local performance/contract management.

Young people	Clients are deemed to be young people if they are aged under 18 at triage. There is no distinction between those with a primary problem substance of drugs (such as cannabis) or alcohol – they are all classified as in substance misuse treatment.
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## Supporting documents

The implementation guidance should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Title
CSV file format
NDTMS technical definitions
NDTMS reference data
Adult drug and alcohol misuse treatment business definitions
Young people's drug and alcohol treatment business definitions
Secure setting adult drug and alcohol treatment business definitions
Secure setting young people's drug and alcohol treatment business definitions
NDTMS patient information leaflet
NDTMS consent and confidentiality guidance
Data sharing protocol between drug and alcohol treatment services and PHE
Consent to NDTMS
DAPB0107 Amd 50/2021 Specification
DAPB0107 Amd 50/2021 Change Request
DAPB0107 Amd 50/2020 Information Standards Notice

## Contacts

For general queries about this document please contact: [ndtms.admin@phe.gov.uk](mailto:ndtms.admin@phe.gov.uk). Treatment providers should contact their regional NDTMS team if they have any questions. Regional team contact details can be found in the table below. Software suppliers should contact [NDTMS.admin@phe.gov.uk](mailto:NDTMS.admin@phe.gov.uk) if they have any questions.

Region	Email address
London	<a href="mailto:NDTMS.London@phe.gov.uk">NDTMS.London@phe.gov.uk</a>
South East	<a href="mailto:NDTMS.SouthEast@phe.gov.uk">NDTMS.SouthEast@phe.gov.uk</a>
South West	<a href="mailto:NDTMS.SouthWest@phe.gov.uk">NDTMS.SouthWest@phe.gov.uk</a>
West Midlands	<a href="mailto:NDTMS.WestMidlands@phe.gov.uk">NDTMS.WestMidlands@phe.gov.uk</a>
East and East Midlands	<a href="mailto:NDTMS.Eastern@phe.gov.uk">NDTMS.Eastern@phe.gov.uk</a>
North West	<a href="mailto:NDTMS.NorthWest@phe.gov.uk">NDTMS.NorthWest@phe.gov.uk</a>
North East, Yorkshire and Humber	<a href="mailto:NDTMS.NorthernAndYorkshire@phe.gov.uk">NDTMS.NorthernAndYorkshire@phe.gov.uk</a>

## Purpose

NDTMS Core Dataset Q (CDS-Q) will be introduced in April 2022.

This document is intended to support the implementation of NDTMS CDS-Q by software suppliers and drug and alcohol treatment providers. It should be read in conjunction with the supporting documents listed above.

This document also includes information on a variety of topics that impact implementation of the data set such as information governance, training and ongoing maintenance.

Treatment providers should contact their regional NDTMS team if they have any questions. Software suppliers should contact [NDTMS.admin@phe.gov.uk](mailto:NDTMS.admin@phe.gov.uk) if they have any questions.

## Introduction

The NDTMS dataset collates information on drug and alcohol treatment in England.

NDTMS data helps drug and alcohol treatment demonstrate the outcomes it achieves for the people it treats and in doing so aids accountability for the money invested in it. NDTMS is a national standard and is applicable to young people and adults within community and secure setting-based treatment providers.

NDTMS data are used to:

- provide measurements that support the outcome and recovery focus of the government's drug strategy
- provide information which can be used to monitor how effective drug and alcohol treatment services are and help to plan and develop services that better meet local needs
- produce statistics and support research about drug and alcohol use and treatment
- provide measures to support the [Public Health Outcomes Framework](#).

Substance misuse treatment providers have been reporting drug and alcohol treatment data to Regional Drug Misuse Databases (RDMDs) since the late 1980s. The National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS) was established in 2004 as a central repository for this data collection. NDTMS moved into PHE in 2013. In October 2021, NDTMS will move to the Office for Health Promotion (OHP) within the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

This Information Standard is sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care. It is being led by the National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS).

The Information Standards Notice has been distributed to NDTMS data providers and commissioners using existing contact lists.

The Specification outlines how the standard must be technically implemented, and is supported by the [CSV file format](#) document and the [NDTMS technical definitions](#) that software suppliers must comply with. The data extracts must be submitted to NDTMS on a monthly basis by drug and alcohol treatment providers using the NDTMS V2 portal.

[CSV file format](#), [NDTMS technical definitions](#), [NDTMS reference data](#) and [NDTMS business definitions](#) for each dataset are published on .gov.uk and have been distributed to data providers using existing contact lists.

## Scope of the information standard

The information standard applies to all drug and alcohol treatment providers who are delivering structured treatment, including adult and young people's services, as follows:

- community services including NHS, third sector and private providers
- residential rehabs and inpatient detox centres
- primary care
- secure setting services including:
  - prisons
  - Young Offender Institutions (YOIs)
  - Secure Training Centres (STCs)
  - Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs)
  - Secure children's homes
  - Welfare only homes

The standard also impacts upon all software suppliers who are providing NDTMS compliant systems for providers to use to record and extract NDTMS data.

## Implementation process

Treatment providers and software suppliers should ensure that they have read the [Information Standards Notice \(ISN\)](#). This is the official notification of the Information Standard, published by the Data Alliance Partnership Board (DAPB). It provides an outline of the approved standard and timeframe for compliance.

They should also ensure they read the [NDTMS CDS-Q Specification](#). This provides a more detailed description of the Information Standard and includes information such as:

- conformance measures for software suppliers and treatment providers
- reporting timescales
- technical architecture
- consent and confidentiality

### Third party case management system suppliers

NDTMS software suppliers are given 6 months to implement CDS-Q and a software supplier's workshop will be held in October 2021 to go through all the CDS-Q changes and associated [documentation](#). NDTMS will provide guidance to facilitate the implementation and offer support to software suppliers as appropriate. With NDTMS's support software suppliers are expected to provide, as a minimum, a data entry tool and extract function that allows its users to provide NDTMS with the CDS-Q data it requires, as per the [NDTMS specification](#), [NDTMS technical definitions](#) and [CSV file format document](#).

Each software supplier should ensure that it follows the requirements and conformance criteria detailed in the Specification, the [CSV file format](#) and the [NDTMS technical definitions](#).

Software suppliers who believe they can provide an NDTMS compliant system should follow the accreditation process detailed [here](#). Software suppliers that have been through the compliance process and are accredited by NDTMS are listed on [gov.uk](#).

### NDTMS Data Entry Tool (DET)

Treatment providers who do not have access to an NDTMS compliant software system are able to use the Data Entry Tool (DET). This is an online data entry tool that is provided and maintained free of charge to ensure that all treatment providers are able to make NDTMS data submissions. DET will be updated and be CDS-Q compliant on 1 April 2022.

## NDTMS treatment providers

Treatment providers should ensure that they follow the requirements and conformance criteria detailed in the [specification](#), including utilisation of the [NDTMS consent and confidentiality guidance](#) and the [NDTMS business definitions](#).

### Consent and confidentiality

Due to NDTMS collecting and processing personal information it is necessary for treatment providers to obtain informed consent from the service user before collecting data to send to NDTMS.

Consent and confidentiality is covered in full in the [specification](#) and in the associated [NDTMS consent and confidentiality guidance](#). Treatment providers must ensure that they are familiar with these documents and the correct process for gaining client consent to share their data with NDTMS.

## Data quality

Software suppliers and treatment providers can ensure data quality by following the **NDTMS technical definitions**, **business definitions** and **reference data** documents which outline the data items and permissible values of each dataset. Some software suppliers have internal validations built into their systems to maximise data quality at point of entry.

As treatment providers submit data to NDTMS V2 there are numerous rigorous system validations in place that the data must satisfy before it is loaded into the NDTMS database. Any errors must be corrected before the file is accepted.

Further data quality work is undertaken by the NDTMS regional teams on a monthly basis to check the accuracy, validity and consistency of the data provided. Data quality reports are available to providers on NDTMS V2 to allow them to check, monitor and improve their data quality.

On a monthly basis NDTMS teams contact treatment providers to highlight data quality issues that need to be resolved prior to the next submission. Regional teams can monitor which providers have/have not downloaded their DQ reports and monitor improvements/ changes in data quality. Any providers with poor/ decreasing data quality or who are not regularly downloading their DQ reports will be escalated to commissioners. Each regional NDTMS team has a Quality Assurance Strategy outlining the actions they take to improve data quality which they are performance monitored against.

Guidance documents outlining the data quality process, how to download reports and defining each metric are available on NDTMS V2 and from the regional NDTMS teams.

## Appendix A: sponsor, senior responsible officer and developer contacts

Sponsor	
Name	Andrea Duncan
Role	Deputy Branch Head, Healthy Behaviours and Team Leader
Organisation	Department of Health and Social Care
Senior responsible officer	
Name	Professor John Newton
Role	Chief Knowledge Officer
Organisation	Public Health England
Developer	
Name	Paul Tansley
Role	NDTMS Programme Manager
Organisation	National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS), Public Health England
Email address	<a href="mailto:paul.tansley@phe.gov.uk">paul.tansley@phe.gov.uk</a>