

Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard

Implementation
Guidance



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 a new 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 endorsed by the Data Alliance Partnership Sub Board (DAPSB).

This information standard comprises the following documents:

- Implementation Guidance (this document)
- Requirements Specification

An Information Standards Notice (DAPB4094 Amd 12/2023) has been issued as a notification of use and implementation timescales. Please read this alongside the documents for the standard.

The controlled copies of these documents can be found on the [NHS England 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: 18 June 2024



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Document filename:	DAPB4094 Amd 12/2023 Implementation Guidance		
Project / Programme	Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard / Faster Data Flows (FDF) Programme		
Document Reference	DAPB4094 Amd 12/2023		
Project Manager	Rachel German	Status	Final
Owner	Lucy Elliss-Brookes	Version	1.0
Author	FDF Programme Team	Version issue date	18/06/2024

Glossary of Terms

A full glossary of terms is available in the [Requirements Specification](#) that accompanies this Standard.

Contents

1.	Introduction	6
1.1.	Background	6
1.2.	Purpose	6
1.3.	Definition	7
1.4.	Scope	7
2.	Implementation guidance	8
2.1.	Data flow diagram	8
2.2.	Guidance for acute providers	9
2.3.	Considerations for commissioners	10
2.4.	Further information and support	11
2.5.	Implementation timescales	11
2.6.	Useful information	12

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The Faster Data Flows (FDF) Programme has produced the Healthcare Operational Data Flows (HODF): Acute Data Set which provides the definitions for data to provide an automated patient-based daily data collection, to support recovery and with this provide the NHS with a modern data architecture that enables timely, high-quality data to be used to support decision making. The HODF: Acute Data Set will support NHS delivery plans for the recovery of elective care and emergency and urgent care in relation to recovering NHS waiting lists, care co-ordination, and the improvement of managing patient flows through the health and social care system.

Under the Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard (referred to afterwards as ‘this Standard’), providers are required to set up a daily data flow of patient level data via a secure upload method to the Arden and GEM CSU Data Services for Commissioners Regional Office (AGEM DSCRO) on behalf of NHS England. The data is then processed and pseudonymised and flown into the Federated Data Platform / is available for onwards dissemination.

The FDF Programme is managed and owned by NHS England. The content of CSV files is owned and managed by the providers of the data with specifications provided by NHS England. For further background information please see the [Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard Requirements Specification](#).

1.2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide acute providers and their IT system suppliers (as defined under section 1.4) with guidance to support the implementation the DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard. This document should be read in conjunction with:

- DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standards Notice (ISN)
- DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard Requirements Specification
- DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Data Set Specification
- DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute NHS Data Model and Dictionary Change Request

Further implementation guidance for Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute may also be found on the [Faster Data Flows FutureNHS pages](#), in the [HODF:Acute – ISN Supporting documentation](#) folder. Instructions on how to access the FutureNHS pages are included in section 2.2 below.

1.3. Definition

The Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard (DAPB4094 Amd 12/2023) mandates NHS providers of acute activity to submit a daily flow of patient level data to NHS England. The associated collection covers acute activity for admissions, current inpatients, discharges, and outpatients (see section 1.4 below for further detail).

The purpose of collecting this data is to support local and national commissioners/decision makers through the provision of timely data about current services for planning, benchmarking, service improvement, and response to crisis, supporting organisations to comply with their statutory duties.

For further information please see the [Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard Requirements Specification](#).

1.4. Scope

NHS acute providers

This Standard applies to all NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts providing NHS-commissioned acute services. For the purposes of this Standard, the scope of acute services includes secondary care activity undertaken by any NHS Trust or NHS Foundation Trust in England, including overseas patients, but not including patients receiving private treatment within an NHS Trust or NHS Foundation Trust (i.e. within a Private Patient Unit (PPU)). Patient activity in the form of Outpatient Appointments (including Did Not Attends and Cancelled Appointments) and Admitted Patient Care (Hospital Admissions) is included.

A future consultation will be held with independent sector providers who deliver NHS-funded acute activity to inform a potential future expansion of scope.

IT system suppliers

This Standard predominantly, but not exclusively, applies to suppliers of the following electronic information systems:

- Patient administration systems
- Electronic patient records

Provider trusts and foundation trusts will be expected to instruct their system suppliers via local contracts to enable their systems to conform with this Standard.

2. Implementation guidance

2.1. Data flow diagram

Under this Standard, providers will set up a daily data flow of patient level data via a secure upload method to Arden and GEM CSU Data Services for Commissioners Regional Office on behalf of NHS England. The data is then processed and pseudonymised and flown into the Federated Data Platform.

Diagram 1 below provides a high level overview of the data flow associated with this Standard:

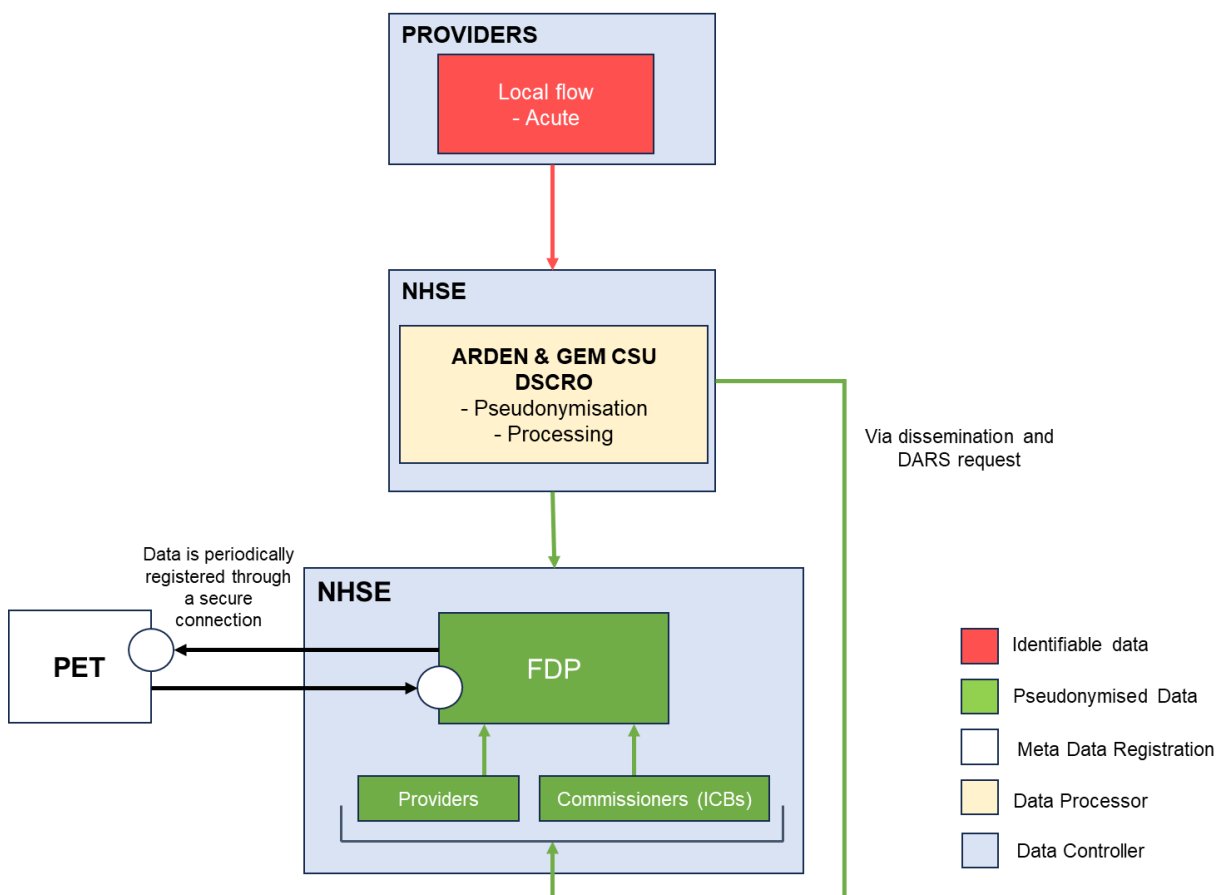


Diagram 1: high level overview of the data flow

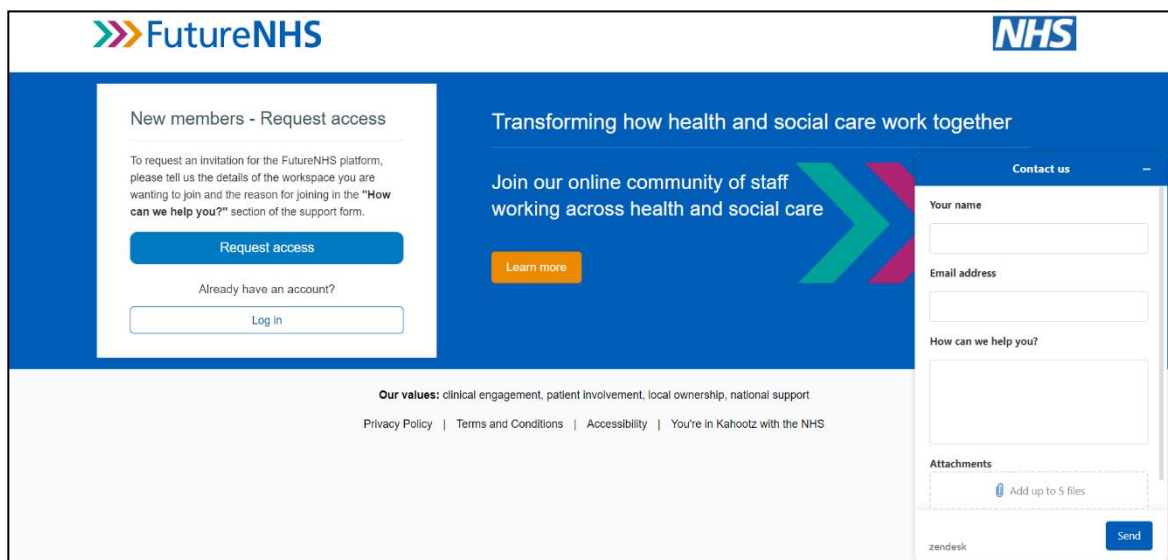
For further information please see the [Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard Requirements Specification](#).

2.2. Guidance for acute providers

This section details the actions required of acute providers in implementing this Standard. Providers should note that full user guidance and supporting documentation is available via the [FDF FutureNHS pages](#), in the [HODF:Acute – ISN supporting documentation folder](#).

To access those pages, you will need to:

1. Register for an account via [FutureNHS Collaboration Platform - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#)
2. Enter your email address and click the 'Register / Request Access' button. Then you will be taken to a screen like the picture below:



The screenshot shows the FutureNHS 'New members - Request access' page. The page has a blue header with the FutureNHS logo on the left and the NHS logo on the right. The main content area is split into two columns. The left column contains a 'Request access' button and a 'Log in' button. The right column contains a 'Contact us' form with fields for 'Your name', 'Email address', and 'How can we help you?'. There is also an 'Attachments' section with a 'Send' button. The footer contains 'Our values' and links for 'Privacy Policy', 'Terms and Conditions', 'Accessibility', and 'You're in Kahootz with the NHS'.

3. Click the blue 'Request Access' button on the left-hand side of the screen. This will then make the 'Contact Us' box appear on the right-hand side of the screen.
4. Fill in your:
 - a. Name
 - b. Email address
 - c. In the 'how can we help you' section add in 'Please can I have access to the National Reporting FutureNHS page ([National Reporting FutureNHS page](#)). <Enter reason why you need access>'. Then click send.
5. Once completed, your registration will go for approval. If approved, you will receive an email asking you to create a password for your account.

The table below provides an overview of the steps acute providers need to follow to implement this Standard:

Step	Activity	Description
1	Understand the background and scope of the Information Standard	Review this implementation guidance along with the Requirements Specification and other documentation to fully understand the background, objectives and scope of this Information Standard.
2	Identify and engage key stakeholders	Identify the key stakeholders for your implementation and ensure they are aware of the requirement.
3	Understand the required data	Review the Data Set Specification to understand which data items are included and whether they are mandatory, required, or optional for submission. Check whether local systems record the data in a way that can be submitted and liaise with system suppliers if required.
4	Understand the reporting period and submission requirements	Review the user guide to fully understand the reporting period and submission requirements.
5	Obtain submission tokens	Follow the steps within the user guide to request the security tokens you need for making submissions.
6	Gain access to the Federated Data Platform	Follow the steps within the user guide to request access to the Federated Data Platform.
7	Generate and submit CSV files	Follow the steps in the user guide to generate and submit your CSV files – this process is fully automatable.
8	Monitor data quality via the Federated Data Platform	Access the data quality dashboards in the Federated Data Platform to review the quality of your submissions.

2.3. Considerations for commissioners

Although commissioners are not responsible for the production and submission of the Standard they need to be prepared for its receipt and plan accordingly. They will also need to support local providers with the implementation of the Standard.

Commissioning organisations should review their existing contracts/frameworks and make any adjustments necessary to allow providers to comply with the Standard in line with the compliance deadlines.

Staff training and awareness of the Standard will need to be considered.

2.4. Further information and support

Supporting documents for DAPB4094 (this Standard) include:

- DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standards Notice (ISN)
- DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard Requirements Specification
- DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standard Implementation Guidance (this document)
- DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Data Set Specification
- DAPB4094 Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute NHS Data Model and Dictionary Change Request

The above documents will be published on the [ISN page](#) for this Standard. Further implementation guidance for Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute may also be found on the [Faster Data Flows FutureNHS pages](#), in the [HODF: Acute – ISN supporting documentation](#) folder. Instructions on how to access the FutureNHS pages are included in section 2.2 above.

For support with the Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standards Notice please contact england.fdf@nhs.net.

2.5. Implementation timescales

Implementation of this Standard should commence immediately upon publication of the Information Standards Notice. Compliance with this Standard must be achieved by 18 October 2024.

2.6. Useful information

Data saves lives: reshaping health and social care with data	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-saves-lives-reshaping-health-and-social-care-with-data/data-saves-lives-reshaping-health-and-social-care-with-data
Healthcare Operational Data Flows Directions	https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/corporate-information-and-documents/directions-and-data-provision-notice/secretary-of-state-directions/healthcare-operational-data-flows-directions-2024
Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Data Provision Notice	https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/corporate-information-and-documents/directions-and-data-provision-notice/data-provision-notice-dpns/healthcare-operational-data-flows-acute
Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Data Set Specification	https://future.nhs.uk/OIforC/view?objectID=48685520
Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute NHS Data Model and Dictionary Change Request	Short URL: http://digital.nhs.uk/isce/publication/dapb4094 Full URL: https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/information-standards/information-standards-and-data-collections-including-extractions/publications-and-notifications/standards-and-collections/dapb4094-healthcare-operational-data-flows-acute-information-standard
Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute Information Standards Notice page	Short URL: http://digital.nhs.uk/isce/publication/dapb4094 Full URL: https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/information-standards/information-standards-and-data-collections-including-extractions/publications-and-notifications/standards-and-collections/dapb4094-healthcare-operational-data-flows-acute-information-standard
Faster Data Flows FutureNHS pages	https://future.nhs.uk/OIforC/view?objectId=38648080

Faster Data Flows FutureNHS pages, HODF:Acute – ISN supporting documentation folder	https://future.nhs.uk/OIforC/view?objectID=48685520
Healthcare Operational Data Flows: Acute User Guide	https://future.nhs.uk/OIforC/view?objectID=48685520
FutureNHS Collaboration Platform	https://future.nhs.uk/Home/grouphome
National Reporting FutureNHS page:	https://future.nhs.uk/OIforC