

# Announcement of methodological change

## Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) reports

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## Introduction

This paper announces and describes changes relevant to all IAPT publications based on data from the June 2019 Refresh submission onwards.

## Background

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) is an NHS programme in England that offers interventions approved by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)<sup>1</sup> for treating people with depression or anxiety.

The IAPT programme is supported by a regular return of data generated by providers of IAPT services in delivering those services to patients. These data are received by NHS Digital and published in monthly and annual reports<sup>2</sup>.

Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) are questionnaires completed by patients attending IAPT services, the responses to which are designed to inform clinicians about the severity of the patient's symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorders. The data gathered from these questionnaires is also used to calculate patient outcomes such as recovery.

Several published data measures look for the presence of 'paired scores' on various PROMs. A referral is considered to have paired scores on an outcome measure if there are at least two distinct questionnaires from which a change (outcome) can be assessed. We are introducing changes to some of these measures, and these changes are described below.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nice.org.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.digital.nhs.uk/iaptreports>

## Description of changes

NHS England have sought clinical advice to attribute reliable change and caseness thresholds to the Panic Disorder Severity Scale (PDSS); a patient reported outcome questionnaire that should be recorded at each contact with a patient presenting to an IAPT service where the provisional diagnosis/ problem descriptor is Panic Disorder.

This questionnaire is an Anxiety Disorder Specific Measure that is being used by services. Prior exclusion was based on the lack of a clinically agreed threshold for caseness and reliable change. Now that these exist, this measure should be used in the same way that others are in Official Statistics and NHS England are to issue guidance to providers about best practice in recording of Anxiety Disorder Specific Measures that includes reference to this questionnaire.

NHS Digital will incorporate this questionnaire into the assessment of paired scores and outcomes measures across all IAPT publications.

The full list of affected measures can be found below, and a summary of the impact can be found in the 'Impact' section of this Notice.

Changes to the PDSS thresholds have been applied from data submitted in April 2019 and affect June 2019 and Quarter 1 2019-20 final data.

## Agreed thresholds

The following thresholds have been agreed for reliable change and for caseness on the PDSS:

- Score range: 0 to 28
- Reliable change threshold: greater than 5
- Caseness threshold: 8 and above

## Impact

The completeness of the PDSS field has been assessed below.

Using 2018-19 annual data, an assessment was made of the number of referrals finishing a course of treatment where valid scores were recorded for the PDSS:

PDSS recording	Number of referrals finishing treatment in 2018-19 where problem descriptor was Panic Disorder	Percentage of referrals finishing treatment in 2018-19 where problem descriptor was Panic Disorder
No PDSS scores	13,572	81.9%
One PDSS score	1,077	6.5%
Paired PDSS scores	1,921	11.6%
Total	16,570	

The table below shows how the changes described above impact June 2019 Final data:

	Paired ADSM and PHQ	Recovery	Recovery rate	Reliable improvement	Reliable improvement rate	Reliable recovery	Reliable recovery rate
Published data with the change	47325	23106	51.4	32202	67.4	21955	48.9
Without the change	47325	23032	51.3	32107	67.2	21893	48.7
Absolute change	0	74	0.1	95	0.2	62	0.2
Percentage change	0%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%

## Affected measures

This section lists the measures that may be affected by these changes within routine IAPT publications:

Where found	Measure name	Description
Monthly CSV	FirstADSMOnly	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and had only one anxiety measure recorded.
Monthly CSV	NoADSM	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and had no anxiety measures recorded.
Monthly CSV	PairedADSM	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and had paired anxiety measures recorded.
Monthly CSV	PairedADSMPHQ	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and had paired anxiety measures and PHQ9 scores recorded.
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV	ADSMFinishedTreatment	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and had an Anxiety Disorder Specific Measure (ADSM) related problem descriptor recorded.
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV	CountAppropriatePairedADSM	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and had appropriate paired Anxiety Disorder Specific Measure (ADSM) scores for the problem descriptor recorded.
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV	PercentageAppropriatePairedADSM	Proportion of referrals that had an Anxiety Disorder Specific Measure (ADSM) related problem descriptor that had appropriate paired ADSM scores for that specific problem descriptor, expressed as a percentage.
Monthly CSV	PercentageNotAtCaseness	Proportion of referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment where the service user was not at caseness at initial assessment, expressed as a percentage.
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV, Executive Summary	NotCaseness	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment where the service user was not at caseness at initial assessment.
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV, Executive Summary	Recovery	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment where the service user has moved to recovery.
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV, Executive Summary	Improvement	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and show reliable improvement
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV, Executive Summary	Deterioration	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and show reliable deterioration.
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV, Executive Summary	NoReliableChange	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and show no reliable change.

Where found	Measure name	Description
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV, Executive Summary	ReliableRecovery	Referrals with an end date in the month that finished a course of treatment and show reliable recovery (has moved to recovery and show reliable improvement).
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV, Executive Summary	ImprovementRate	Proportion of referrals that finished a course of treatment (end date in the month and a minimum of two attended treatment appointments in the course of the referral) that showed reliable improvement, expressed as a percentage.
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV, Executive Summary	RecoveryRate	Proportion of referrals that finished a course of treatment (end date in the month and a minimum of two attended treatment appointments in the course of the referral) having started treatment at caseness that moved to recovery, expressed as a percentage.
Monthly CSV, Quarterly CSV, Executive Summary	ReliableRecoveryRate	Proportion of referrals that finished a course of treatment (end date in the month and a minimum of two attended treatment appointments in the course of the referral) having started treatment at caseness that showed reliable recovery, expressed as a percentage.
Data Quality Report	34, 63, 92 – Anxiety Disorder Specific Measures	Records with a problem descriptor of a specific anxiety disorder for which an ADSM exists and having an associated relevant ADSM score, as a proportion of all attended appointment records associated with a referral with a specific anxiety disorder.  For example, a referral with a problem descriptor of Panic Disorder should have an associated PDSS questionnaire.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	Standard - Number of finished integrated referrals that started treatment at caseness	Number of referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of integrated referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month') where the patient was at caseness at initial assessment (using the same scoring criteria defined in routine IAPT reporting), and having at least one attended integrated appointment.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	Standard - Number of finished integrated referrals that started treatment not at caseness	Number of referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of integrated referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month') where the patient was not at caseness at initial assessment (using the same scoring criteria defined in routine IAPT reporting), and having at least one attended treatment appointment.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	Standard - Number of finished integrated referrals that moved to recovery	Referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of integrated referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month') where the patient moved to recovery (using the

Where found	Measure name	Description
		same scoring criteria defined in routine IAPT reporting), and having at least one attended integrated appointment.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	Standard - Moved to recovery rate for integrated referrals	Referrals that moved to recovery (using the same scoring criteria defined in routine IAPT reporting) as a proportion of referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of integrated referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month'), and having at least one attended integrated appointment, expressed as a percentage.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	MUS - Number of finished integrated referrals that started treatment at caseness	Number of referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of integrated referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month') where the patient was at caseness at initial assessment (defined using MUS measures where appropriate), and having at least one attended integrated appointment.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	MUS - Number of finished integrated referrals that started treatment not at caseness	Number of referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of integrated referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month') where the patient was not at caseness at initial assessment (defined using MUS measures where appropriate), and having at least one attended integrated appointment.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	MUS - Number of finished integrated referrals that moved to recovery	Referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of integrated referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month') where the patient moved to recovery (defined using MUS measures where appropriate), and having at least one attended integrated appointment.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	MUS - Moved to recovery rate for integrated referrals	Referrals that moved to recovery (defined using MUS measures where appropriate) as a proportion of referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of integrated referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month'), and having at least one attended integrated appointment, expressed as a percentage.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	Core only - Number of finished integrated referrals that started treatment at caseness	Number of referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of integrated referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month') where the patient was at caseness at initial assessment, (using the same scoring criteria defined in routine IAPT reporting), and having had no attended integrated appointments.

Where found	Measure name	Description
Integrated Services pilot data tables	Core only - Number of finished integrated referrals that started treatment not at caseness	Number of referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of core-only referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month') where the patient was not at caseness at initial assessment (using the same scoring criteria defined in routine IAPT reporting), and having had no attended integrated treatment appointments.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	Core only - Number of finished integrated referrals that moved to recovery	Referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of core-only referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month') where the patient moved to recovery (using the same scoring criteria defined in routine IAPT reporting), and having at least one attended integrated appointment.
Integrated Services pilot data tables	Core only - Moved to recovery rate for integrated referrals	Referrals that moved to recovery (using the same scoring criteria defined in routine IAPT reporting) as a proportion of referrals with an end date in the month that have finished a course of treatment (according to definition in 'Number of core-only referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month'), and having had no attended integrated appointments, expressed as a percentage.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received IAPT therapy only and started not at caseness	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields for ALL appointments indicate Employment Support has not been given before the referral end date where the patient was not at caseness at initial assessment.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received IAPT therapy only and showed reliable improvement	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields for ALL appointments indicate Employment Support has not been given before the referral end date where the patient showed reliable improvement.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Reliable improvement rate for referrals finishing in the month that received IAPT therapy only	Referrals that showed reliable improvement as a proportion of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields for ALL appointments indicate Employment Support has not been given before

Where found	Measure name	Description
		the referral end date, expressed as a percentage.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received IAPT therapy only and showed no reliable change	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields for ALL appointments indicate Employment Support has not been given before the referral end date where the patient showed no reliable change.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received IAPT therapy only and showed reliable deterioration	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields for ALL appointments indicate Employment Support has not been given before the referral end date where the patient showed reliable deterioration.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received IAPT therapy only and moved to recovery	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields for ALL appointments indicate Employment Support has not been given before the referral end date where the patient moved to recovery.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Recovery rate for referrals finishing in the month that received IAPT therapy only	Referrals that moved to recovery as a proportion of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table and were at caseness at initial assessment. The therapy type and employment support type fields for ALL appointments indicate Employment Support has not been given before the referral end date, expressed as a percentage.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received IAPT therapy only and showed reliable recovery	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields for ALL appointments indicate Employment Support has not been given before the referral end date where the patient showed reliable recovery.

Where found	Measure name	Description
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Reliable recovery rate for referrals finishing in the month that received IAPT therapy only	Referrals that showed reliable recovery as a proportion of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table and were at caseness at initial assessment. The therapy type and employment support type fields for ALL appointments indicate Employment Support has not been given before the referral end date, expressed as a percentage.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received EA support and started not at caseness	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully links to a corresponding appointment in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields are correctly set to indicate Employment Support has been given on or before the referral end date where the patient was not at caseness at initial assessment.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received EA support and showed reliable improvement	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully links to a corresponding appointment in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields are correctly set to indicate Employment Support has been given on or before the referral end date where the patient showed reliable improvement.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Reliable improvement rate for referrals finishing in the month that received EA support	Referrals that showed reliable improvement as a proportion of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully links to a corresponding appointment in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields are correctly set to indicate Employment Support has been given on or before the referral end date, expressed as a percentage.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received EA support and showed no reliable change	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields are correctly set to indicate Employment Support has been given on or before the referral end date where the patient showed no reliable change.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received EA support and showed reliable deterioration	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the

Where found	Measure name	Description
		referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields are correctly set to indicate Employment Support has been given on or before the referral end date where the patient showed reliable deterioration.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received EA support and moved to recovery	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields are correctly set to indicate Employment Support has been given on or before the referral end date where the patient moved to recovery.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Recovery rate for referrals finishing in the month that received EA support	Referrals that moved to recovery as a proportion of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table and were at caseness at initial assessment. The therapy type and employment support type fields are correctly set to indicate Employment Support has been given on or before the referral end date, expressed as a percentage.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Number of referrals finishing in the month that received EA support and showed reliable recovery	Number of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table. The therapy type and employment support type fields are correctly set to indicate Employment Support has been given on or before the referral end date where the patient showed reliable recovery.
EA in IAPT pilot data tables	Reliable recovery rate for referrals finishing in the month that received EA support	Referrals that showed reliable recovery as a proportion of referrals that finished a course of treatment in the month having at least one attended appointment (during the referral pathway, or a follow up appointment after the referral end date) that successfully link to corresponding appointments in the EA pilot table and were at caseness at initial assessment. The therapy type and employment support type fields are correctly set to indicate Employment Support has been given on or before the referral end date, expressed as a percentage.

## Further information

### Key resources

For an explanation of all measures in the Monthly & Quarterly Activity Data File CSVs, see the [IAPT Metadata Document](#) and the [Guide to IAPT data and publications](#).

For the specification of the IAPT dataset, see the [IAPT v1.5 Technical Output Specification](#).

For the IAPT Manual, see the NHS IAPT website with supporting information:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/adults/iapt/>

Or access the manual directly here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2018/06/the-iapt-manual.pdf>

### NHS Digital IAPT webpages

For resources related to monthly IAPT publications and links to all historical IAPT publications:

<http://www.digital.nhs.uk/iaptreports>

For resources related to the IAPT dataset:

<http://www.digital.nhs.uk/iapt>