

Announcement of methodological change

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) monthly reports

Published 13 September 2018

Information and technology
for better health and care

Contents

Introduction	3
Background	3
Description of changes	3
What about other affected measures?	4
Impact	4
Further information	5
Key resources	5
NHS Digital IAPT webpages	5

Introduction

This paper announces and describes changes to routine monthly IAPT reports, effective for data published on or after 13 September 2018.

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)¹ 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 reports².

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.

Description of changes

In June 2018, new guidance issued by NHS England to providers of IAPT services in England states that PROMs should only be issued to patients during appointments with a trained clinician. This means that in appointments with Employment Advisers, which services can offer alongside suitable clinical treatments, the patient should not be asked to complete PROMs.

NHS Digital will align all published IAPT data with this new guidance. This requires the exclusion of any PROMs scores submitted where the only therapy type recorded in the appointment was 'Employment Support'. For clarity, where an appointment has 'Employment Support' recorded alongside any other IAPT therapies, scores from these appointments will not be excluded from analysis.

The following measures, published in the Monthly Activity Data File CSV, are affected by this change, starting with the publication of June 2018 final data. These changes will be fully described in the IAPT Metadata Document:

- FirstADSMOnly
- NoADSM
- PairedADSM
- FirstPHQOnly
- NoPHQ
- PairedPHQ
- PairedADSMPHQ

¹ <https://www.nice.org.uk/>

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

What about other affected measures?

There are many measures affected by this new guidance and NHS Digital is working to align all of these. However, it has been necessary to prioritise those measures that are most likely to be impacted by this change in guidance. Further changes to other measures will be announced later in the year.

Impact

There are few Employment Support appointments (1,864 in May 2018, or 0.4% of all attended appointments) in IAPT, and only a subset of these contain no other IAPT therapies. Of these, many will not contain any valid PROMs scores (as the guidance states they should not be collected) and so the impact of this change is expected to be very small. The table below shows how this change impacts May 2018 Final data:

	First ADSM only	No ADSM	Paired ADSM	First PHQ only	No PHQ	Paired PHQ	Paired ADSM and PHQ
Originally published	421	71	50,317	424	67	50,318	50,309
With change	453	78	50,278	456	74	50,279	50,270
Absolute change	32	7	39	32	7	39	39
Percentage change	7.6%	9.9%	-0.1%	7.5%	10.4%	-0.1%	-0.1%

Note the following:

- The measures *FirstADSMOnly*, *NoADSM* and *PairedADSM* are dependent and will always add up to the total *FinishedCourseTreatment* (number of referrals finishing a course of treatment in the month).
- Similarly, *FirstPHQOnly*, *NoPHQ* and *PairedPHQ* will also add up to *FinishedCourseTreatment*.
- *PairedADSMPHQ* is a standalone measure showing the subset of *FinishedCourseTreatment* that have both paired ADSM and PHQ scores; and should never be higher than either *PairedADSM* or *PairedPHQ*.

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>