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Announcement of methodological change to Statistics on Drug Misuse, England, 2018 (November update)

Change in methodology for calculating NHS hospital admissions with a primary diagnosis of poisoning by drug misuse (previously data tables 5 and 6 – tables 3.1 to 3.3 from November 2018)

The ICD10 diagnosis code T40.4 (poisoning by other synthetic narcotics) has been excluded from the above measure since 2012/13. This was because the prescription drug Tramadol was added to inclusions under that code in 2012/13 when it was not a controlled drug. However, Tramadol has since been added to the list of controlled drugs in a 2014 amendment to the Misuse of Drug Act 1971 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/circular-0082014-changes-to-the-misuse-of-drugs-act-1971>).

As such, the code T40.4 will be restored to this measure for future publications including the update of time series data back to 2012/13 to provide a comparable measure from that time. This adds between 2,700 and 3,800 admissions per year to the measure (based on the years 2012/13 to 2016/17). Prior to 2012/13, code T40.4 only represented around 200-300 admissions per year. As a result, there will be a significant break in time series in 2012/13, meaning that data prior to then will not be comparable.

This approach has been agreed with the Drugs & Alcohol Research, Crime and Policing Analysis team at the Home Office.

All existing publications can be found via the link below:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/statistics-on-drug-misuse>