

Announcement of methodological change to NHS Outcomes Framework cancer survival indicators

From March 2013, cancer survival indicators in the NHS Outcomes Framework will be published using a different calculation methodology. There are six cancer survival indicators in the NHS Outcomes Framework:

- 1.4.i One-year survival from colorectal cancer
- 1.4.ii Five-year survival from colorectal cancer
- 1.4.iii One-year survival from breast cancer
- 1.4.iv Five-year survival from breast cancer
- 1.4.v One-year survival from lung cancer
- 1.4.vi Five-year survival from lung cancer

The values for indicators 1.4.i to 1.4.vi are sourced fully calculated from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). ONS made 2 changes to the statistical methods for patients diagnosed during 2006–2010:

- First, an unbiased estimator of net survival (Pohar Perme, Stare and Estève, 2012) has been used instead of the conventional relative survival. Net survival accounts for the so-called "informative censoring" bias, i.e. the fact that some groups of patients are less likely than others to be observed until death, independently of their cancer prognosis.
- Second, patients with zero follow-up time have been included. These are patients known to have died on the same day as they were diagnosed; they do not include patients for whom a death certificate was the only information available.

Further details of the methodology used in the ONS publications and details of the revised statistical methods used in the analysis can be found in the last publication:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/cancer-unit/cancer-survival/2006---2010--followed-up-to-2011/stb-cancer-survival.html>

Due to the changes to the methodology, direct comparison of patients diagnosed in 2006 to 2010 and any future time periods with patients diagnosed in previous time periods (2005 to 2009 and before) is not advisable.