

Announcement of methodological changes

Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) in England - April 2009 to March 2010 and April 2010 to March 2011. Pre and post operative data: Experimental Statistics.

To be published: August 2011

Following a review of the current PROMs publication through a consultation survey and an operational assessment, a decision has been made to change the frequency of the PROMs publications and the period that the publications cover.

The current production of cumulative monthly updates has enabled a rich data source to be compiled, however new data now has little impact on overall figures and there is a need to move to a publication which better reflects change over time. From the August 2011 publication, PROMs data will be split by financial year to enable comparison. Data for the 2009/10 financial year will become final whilst data from April 2010 onwards will remain provisional.

The NHS IC website will continue to be updated with national level figures on a monthly basis and customers of the HES interrogation and extract services will continue to have access to the latest data. However, the files produced as part of the publication (including participation rates, provider and commissioner tables, the score comparison spreadsheet and associated CSV files) will henceforth be released on a quarterly basis.

Moving to a quarterly publication will enable us to explore the dataset further, allowing the development of additional reports on different aspects of the data and making the publication more varied and interesting.

Further to changes in frequency of the publications there will also be a change in the methodology used in the score comparison spreadsheet. Currently score comparison spreadsheet charts are presented allowing an organisation's score to be compared to the national average. Whether an organisation is significantly different from the national average is determined using a confidence interval based on variation within that organisation only (intervals that don't overlap with that national confidence interval are taken to be significantly different). Following a review by the PROMs programme it has been decided that the significance of differences from the national average will be determined using pooled variation from within all organisations. This has the effect of bringing consistency to the presentation in that if an organisation's score lies outside of the funnel plot limits it is statistically significantly different to the national average at the level of significance used to draw the funnel. Further information on the methodology is available in the document ['Patient Reported Outcome Measures \(PROMS\) in England: a methodology for identifying potential outliers'](#) on the Department of Health website.

It is expected that there will be a small change in the number of organisations with scores identified as being significantly different from the national picture. Organisations exhibiting a high/low level of variability may see a change in the significance of their score.

Comments on the methodology are welcome and should be sent to:

proms@dh.gsi.gov.uk

Please state "Outlier Methodology" in the subject line.