

Announcement of methodological changes to the Summary Hospital-level Mortality Indicator (SHMI)

Background

The SHMI does not make any adjustment for deprivation. Instead, two contextual indicators are published to support the interpretation of the SHMI. These present the percentage of provider spells¹ and deaths reported in the SHMI which fall under each deprivation quintile. Deprivation quintile 1 is the most deprived group and deprivation quintile 5 is the least deprived group. The deprivation quintile is calculated from the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) rank. At present, this is obtained by linking Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data to the English Indices of Deprivation 2015 dataset using the Lower Super Output Area² 2011 (LSOA11) field.

The methodology for calculating these contextual indicators will be updated so that they use the 2019 version of the IMD which is the latest version available. Further information about the 2019 version of the IMD data is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>.

The change means that the indicator will reflect the latest deprivation data and so will be more useful in aiding the interpretation of the SHMI.

No other SHMI data or contextual indicators are affected by this change.

Impact

The contextual indicators have been calculated using both versions of the IMD for discharges in the period October 2018 – September 2019.

The impact of the change is small at national level. The percentage of spells or deaths in each of the five deprivation quintiles did not change by more than 0.5 percentage points for any quintile. The impact can be large for some trusts due to changes in the IMD for the local areas served by them. The largest change in the percentage of spells or deaths per quintile at trust level was 14.65 percentage points. The smallest was no change which occurred nine times.

¹ A provider spell is a continuous period of time spent as a patient within a single trust (provider). A spell may be composed of more than one episode (a single period of care under one consultant).

² Lower Super Output Areas are homogenous small areas of relatively even size (around 1,500 people), of which there are 32,844 in England.

Timing

The first publication to be affected by this change will be the March 2020 release, which covers discharges in the period November 2018 – October 2019.

Further information

Questions and feedback on the publication are welcomed and should be sent to enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk or alternatively call 0300 303 5678.