

Version 1, published 16 March 2017

Announcement of methodological change to Statistics on Obesity, Physical Activity and Diet, England - 2017 [NS]¹

The methodology used to calculate rates per population for hospital admissions and bariatric surgery procedures has changed. Specifically instead of using the latest England mid-year population estimates as the denominator, the European standard population will be used².

This follows a user consultation early in 2016³ where the majority of users were content with this change.

This methodology has been used historically by Public Health England to produce standardised rates for Statistics on Alcohol and is now used by NHS Digital to produce standardised rates for Statistics on Drug Misuse and Statistics on Smoking.

The advantage of using the European standard population is that it does not change year on year in the same way as mid-year population estimates do. Therefore a user of the standardised rates can be more confident that a change in the rate over time is due to a change in the number of admissions or procedures and not due to a change in the population demographics.

On average, the impact at local authority level is as follows:

Finished Admission Episodes with a primary diagnosis of obesity +2.7%
Finished Admission Episodes with a primary or secondary diagnosis of obesity +8.4%
Finished Consultant Episodes with a primary diagnosis of obesity and a main or secondary procedure of 'Bariatric Surgery' +3.6%

¹ [NS] denotes that the publication has National Statistics status

² <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160105160709/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/health-and-life-events/revised-european-standard-population-2013--2013-esp-/index.html>.

³ <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/article/6770/Consultation-on-Lifestyles-Compendia-Reports>