

# Statistics on NHS Stop Smoking Services in England – Users and Uses

From our engagement with customers, we know that there are many users of the NHS Stop Smoking Services (SSS) statistics. There are also many users of these statistics who we do not know about. We are continually aiming to improve our understanding of who our users are in order to enhance our knowledge on what the uses of the data are via recent consultations and feedback forms available online. Below is listed our current understanding of the known users and uses of these statistics. Also included are the methods we use to attempt to engage with the current unknown users.

## Known Users and Uses

**Academia and Researchers** - Academics cite the SSS data in their research papers.

**Department of Health (DH)** - SSS data form an essential part of the current Operating Framework Indicators and enable the Department of Health to monitor performance and identify best practice. The White Paper, *Healthy lives, Healthy people: Our strategy for public health in England* was published in November 2010 sets out the Government's commitment to improving public health in communities across England and the Tobacco Control Plan, *Healthy lives, Healthy people: A Tobacco Control Plan for England* published on 9 March 2011 includes a section on 'Helping Tobacco users to quit'.

**Media** - the data is used to underpin articles in newspapers, journals, etc. An example from last year's survey is available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-14540517>

**NHS** - frequently use the reports, tables and datasets for local analyses, benchmarking and to inform decision making. The data assists Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) in monitoring Primary Care Trusts' (PCTs) performance and helps PCTs to benchmark their performance and identify which treatment settings and intervention types are consistently getting the best results. From April responsibility for commissioning SSS has moved to Local Authorities this data will help them in their new capacity.

**Public** - The statistics also inform members of the public who may intend to stop smoking about the local settings that are available to them and what their relative success rates are.

**Public Health Campaign Groups and Charities** - data are used to inform policy and decision making and to examine trends and behaviours. Examples include the **Smokefree campaign** - [www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree) and **Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)** - [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk)

**Public Health Observatories** - frequently use the data and accompanying datasets for secondary analysis. The London Health Observatory is the lead Public Health Observatory on smoking for the Public Health Observatories in England.

[http://www.lho.org.uk/LHO\\_Topics/National\\_Lead\\_Areas/NationalSmoking.aspx](http://www.lho.org.uk/LHO_Topics/National_Lead_Areas/NationalSmoking.aspx)

**Ad-hoc Requests** - the statistics are used by the Health and Social Care Centre (HSCIC) to answer Parliamentary Questions (PQs), Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, and ad-hoc queries. Ad-hoc requests are received from health professionals, research companies, public sector organisations, and from members of the public showing that the statistics are used widely and not solely within the profession. We received 51 ad-hoc requests and 2 PQs since the SSS 2011-12 was published in August 2012.

### Unknown Users

The report is free to access via the HSCIC website and therefore the majority of users will access the report without being known to the HSCIC. Therefore it is important to put mechanisms in place to try to understand how these additional users are using the statistics and also to gain feedback on how we can make the data more useful to them. On the webpage where the report is surfaced there is a link to a feedback webform which the HSCIC uses for all its reports. The specific questions asked on the form are:

How useful did you find the content in this publication?

How did you find out about this publication?

What type of organisation do you work for?

What did you use the report for? What information was the most useful? Were you happy with the data quality?

To help us improve our publications, what changes would you like to see (for instance content or timing)?

Would you like to take part in future consultations on our publications?

Any responses via this webform are passed to the team responsible for the report to consider.

We also capture information on the number of web hits the reports receive, although we are unable to capture who the users are from this. SSS 2011-12 generated approximately 800 unique web hits since it was published in August 2012 and the separate quarterly reports (Quarter 1 to Quarter 3) generated an additional 1,200 unique hits.