



Public Health
England



Health & Social Care
Information Centre

Public Health England
Wellington House
135-155 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8UG
T +44 (0)20 7654 8000
E PHE@phe.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/phe

To: The Chief Executive
Director of Public Health

PHE Gateway number: 2013041

7 June 2013

Data returns for Council public health functions

As Councils take on their new leadership role for improving local health and wellbeing, they need to be able to rely on the continued availability of key data and intelligence to support this function. Some of the relevant data will now need to be provided by Councils themselves.

This letter is to inform Chief Executives and Directors of Public Health of the data they are asked to ensure are returned, variously, to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) or Public Health England. These returns cover the three prescribed public health functions on the Department of Communities and Local Government Single Data List, and one non-prescribed function.

The ring-fenced allocations to support Councils in delivering their public health functions in 2013/14 and 2014/15 include funding for the collection of these and other data on public health service delivery and outcomes.

We recognise the tremendous amount of work already done by Councils to support their Directors of Public Health and to ensure that essential public health data returns continue. These data are of significant value for informing strategic commissioning plans, monitoring commissioned services, reviewing changing health needs and assessing comparative health outcomes.

The appendices to this letter set out the detail of the public health data returns and provide further information on their importance to Councils, Public Health England and the HSCIC.

Yours faithfully,

Professor John Newton
Chief Knowledge Officer
Public Health England

John Varlow
Director of Information Services
Health and Social Care Information Centre

Appendix A: Prescribed and non-prescribed public health data returns from Councils

Public health function	Data return (Information Standard ¹)	Returned to Councils from	Returned by Councils to	Frequency	Further details	
Prescribed data returns on the Single Data List						
1	NHS Health Check Programme	Summary activity return (no ISB)	GP practices / service providers	Public Health England	Annual and quarterly (submission dates: mid-July, October, January and April)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHE is currently developing a secure reporting tool, which will be available at: www.healthcheck.nhs.uk Further information on the summary activity return will be published by Public Health England in June 2013
2	National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP)	Childhood measurement central return (ISB 0146)	Service providers	HSCIC	Annual by school year (submission deadline for 2012/13 data: 16 August 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further information on the NCMP can be found at: www.hscic.gov.uk/ncmp Operational guidance for the 2013/14 school year will be published by Public Health England in summer 2013 (operational guidance for 2012/13 can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-child-measurement-programme-operational-guidance-for-the-2012-13-school-year)
3	Community Contraceptive Services	KT31 (ISB 1518)	Sexual and reproductive health clinics	HSCIC	Annual (submission date: mid-May 2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further information on the KT31 data return can be found at: www.hscic.gov.uk/datacollections/KT31 Data returns must be made using the Omnibus system. Login details for the KT31 return will be sent to Councils by the HSCIC in April 2014 Operational guidance for the 2012/13 collection was published by HSCIC on 8 March 2013 and can be accessed at the address above
Non-prescribed data return						
4	Stop Smoking Services	NHS Stop Smoking Services quarterly return (ISB 0155)	Service providers	HSCIC	Quarterly (submission dates: mid-September, December, March and June)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further information on the Stop Smoking Services data collection can be found at: www.hscic.gov.uk/stopsmoking Data returns must be made using the Stop Smoking Services data capture tool (stopsmokingservices.ic.nhs.uk/welcome.aspx). Login details will be sent to Councils by the HSCIC in early June 2013

¹ Details on the Information Standards can be found at www.isb.nhs.uk/library

Appendix B: Importance of public health data returns from Councils

This appendix summarises the reasons why Councils are being asked to ensure the continuation of certain key data returns for their new public health functions.

It should be read in conjunction with the *Data Flows Transition Manual* published by the HSCIC and NHS England on 28 February 2013¹. The manual catalogues the mandatory and principal voluntary data flows for the new health and social care system; this letter provides specific information for Councils on the arrangements for the public health data they are being asked to return.

Context

The *Public Health in Local Government*² factsheets published by the Department of Health in December 2011 summarise the new public health functions of Councils, and the *Local Public Health Intelligence*³ factsheets published in September 2012 set out the importance of local health knowledge and intelligence support to the commissioning and delivery of essential public health services.

Ensuring that the data returns for the functions that transferred from the NHS to Councils on 1 April 2013 continue is important for the following reasons:

- informing commissioning plans: the data returns underpin the development and scrutiny of robust Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies, and provide information for the annual report of the Director of Public Health;
- monitoring commissioned services: the returns provide essential data for monitoring the delivery of commissioned public health services, and help support sector-led improvement;
- monitoring changing health needs: several years of continuous data are available for most of the collections and ensuring there are no time gaps is central to their value for monitoring changing health needs, and for measuring the effectiveness of local services in reducing the burden of disease;
- benchmarking and assessing comparative outcomes: maintaining complete national coverage of the data returns is essential to enable all Councils to undertake both national benchmarking and peer group comparisons, for example, through the Public Health Outcomes Framework; and
- delivery support: the returns provide data that is used by Public Health England, the HSCIC and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to help Councils deliver their public health functions.

¹ www.ic.nhs.uk/dataflowstransitionmanual

² healthandcare.dh.gov.uk/public-health-system

³ healthandcare.dh.gov.uk/health-intelligence

Data returns for prescribed public health functions

All Councils are required to deliver the following public health functions⁴:

- i. NHS Health Check assessments;
- ii. the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP);
- iii. open access sexual health services (contraception and sexually transmitted infections testing and treatment);
- iv. information and advice to promote local health protection arrangements; and
- v. public health advice to NHS commissioners.

The first three – NHS Health Check assessments, NCMP and the contraception element of sexual health services⁵ – require the return of data, variously, to the HSCIC or Public Health England, and will be included in the Department for Communities and Local Government Single Data List (SDL) for 2013/14⁶. Full details of these prescribed routine data returns will be set out in the SDL, and Appendix A to this letter provides a summary of the new arrangements.

With regard to the data associated with the health protection duties of Councils, the requirements to notify and provide information on health protection incidents are set out in the *Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010* and remain unchanged⁷.

Data returns for non-prescribed public health functions

In addition to the prescribed functions, Councils are responsible for providing a range of other public health services. Several of these have well-established data collections, and Councils are asked to ensure these continue for the reasons set out above.

The only non-prescribed function where Councils are asked to take a direct role in voluntarily collating and returning data to the HSCIC is for Stop Smoking Services.

For other non-prescribed public health functions, Councils will need to ensure that the providers of commissioned services return the relevant data directly to the relevant national body.

The Department of Health recently published a public health services contract to assist with the commissioning of public health services⁸. This includes data return clauses, which Councils are advised to include in all contracts with service providers.

⁴ The Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013 (www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/351/contents/made)

⁵ Data relating to STI testing and treatment are part of the GUMCAD2 data submitted by clinics directly to Public Health England

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/policies/making-local-councils-more-transparent-and-accountable-to-local-people/supporting-pages/single-data-list

⁷ The Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010 (www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/659/contents/made)

⁸ www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/01/phs-contract

Funding for public health data returns from Councils

The costs to Councils of providing both prescribed and non-prescribed public health functions – including the associated data returns – are included in the ring-fenced public health grant announced by the Department of Health on 10 January 2013⁹.

National use of the public health data returns from Councils

All public bodies providing or commissioning health and social care services are required to submit data on outcomes to the HSCIC, the national repository for health and social care information.

The HSCIC is responsible for quality assuring, securely linking and making available back to local areas the information it collects, variously in the form of data sets, indicators, statistical bulletins and reports that Councils can use to deliver their public health functions¹⁰.

Public Health England will also use the information provided by the data returns in its support to Councils, which will include commissioning, health protection, and knowledge and intelligence advice and services.

(ends)

⁹ Ring-Fenced Public Health Grant, Local Authority Circular LAC(DH)(2013)1
(www.gov.uk/government/publications/ring-fenced-public-health-grants-to-local-authorities-2013-14-and-2014-15)

¹⁰ informationstrategy.dh.gov.uk