

Treatment specialty for first, subsequent and all outpatient attendances, 2008-09

For the 2008-09 financial year, Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) has collected more than 74 million records detailing outpatient appointments delivered by NHS hospitals in England or performed in the independent sector, and commissioned by the English NHS.

Outpatient HES data was collected for the first time in 2003-04. The NHS Information Centre first released outpatient data at the end of July 2006 and the data was originally released on an 'experimental' basis. Since then, the experimental label has been removed and in 2008 the outpatient published tables were accredited as a National Statistic. This means the data within these specific tables has been produced in accordance with the '*Code of Practice for Official Statistics*'.

The outpatients' dataset contains individual records for all outpatient appointments occurring in England, such as the type of attendance, ie whether it was a first or follow-up attendance, or the main specialty, ie the specialty under which the consultant with prime responsibility for the patient is registered.

The latest HES data is available from the Freely available data section of the [HESonline website](http://www.hesonline.nhs.uk) [http://www.hesonline.nhs.uk]. For data breakdowns beyond the scope of the tables available, such as a count of appointments split by source of referral (ie whether or not the outpatient appointment was initiated by the consultant responsible for the outpatient attendance or not), please see the Request a tailor made report section of the HESonline website.

Great care must be exercised when comparing HES figures for different years. Fluctuations in the data can occur for a number of reasons, eg organisational changes, reviews of best practice within the medical community, the adoption of new coding schemes and data quality problems that are often year specific. These variations can lead to false assumptions about trends. We advise users of time series data to carefully explore the relevant issues before drawing any conclusions about the reasons for year-on-year changes.

Coverage and data quality

HES data is compiled from data sent by around 300 NHS trusts and primary care trusts (PCTs) in England. Data is also received from a number of independent sector organisations for activity commissioned by the English NHS. The NHS Information Centre liaises closely with these organisations to encourage submission of complete and valid data, and seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data. While this brings about improvement over time, some shortcomings remain.

It is not mandatory for providers to code procedures and diagnoses on outpatient records and therefore the coverage is low. The poor coverage may in part be accounted for by the fact that there may be no appropriate OPCS-4 code available, or that the cause of morbidity was unknown. In 2008-09 around 3% of records had a known cause of morbidity and 8% of records had completed or appropriate OPCS-4 procedure codes. It is not clear how representative the figures are as we have no reliable existing data source to validate the data against; Department of Health aggregate returns have never collected clinical codes.

Please see the Outpatient Data Quality Reports from the Processing the data: Data quality of HES section of HESonline for more information about coverage and data quality issues.

Users of the data who discover apparent anomalies should feel free to contact the HES team at enquiries@ic.nhs.uk, so that they may investigate this further.

Treatment specialty

Treatment specialty reflects the specialty under which the consultant with prime responsibility for the patient is working, which may be different to the main specialty under which the consultant is registered. The treatment specialties, recognised by the Royal Colleges and Faculties, reflect broad ranges of skills and expertise, and provide a quick summary of areas of treatment. The specialty codes consist of three numbers and are followed by a description.

Care is needed when analysing HES data by specialty or by groups of specialties (such as 'acute'), as trusts have different ways of managing specialties.

Table column definitions

This section contains descriptions of the column headers found in the tables that you can download from the HESonline website.

Attended first appointment

This provides a count of those who attended their first face-to-face outpatient appointment.

Attended first telephone consultation

This provides a count of those who attended their first outpatient telephone consultation.

Attended subsequent appointment

This provides a count of those who attended an outpatient appointment that was a follow-up face-to-face appointment rather than their first appointment.

Attended subsequent telephone consultation

This provides a count of those who attended an outpatient telephone consultation that was a follow-up appointment rather than their first tele-consultation.

Attended first/subsequent/telephone unknown

This provides a count of outpatient attendances where it was not known whether the patient was attending a first or subsequent face-to-face appointment or telephone consultation.

Percentage of all attendances

This provides the all attendances count (see above) as a percentage of the total number of all attendances, including those where it's not known whether they were a first or follow-up face-to-face or tele-consultation attendance.

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Treatment specialty by attendance type



The NHS Information Centre, Hospital Episode Statistics for England. Outpatient statistics, 2008-09.
Activity in English NHS Hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector.
Please see the HESonline website (<http://www.hesonline.nhs.uk>) for information on outpatients data quality.

Treatment specialty, 2008-09

		All Attendances	First appointment	First telephone consultation	Subsequent appointment	Subsequent telephone consultation	Attended but first/ subsequent/ telephone unknown	Percentage of all attendances
Total		60,607,226	18,697,457	37,435	41,759,993	87,157	25,184	100.00000%
&	Not Known	415,323	91,052	449	320,222	1,543	2,057	0.68527%
100	General Surgery	2,555,304	998,286	1,648	1,551,033	2,671	1,666	4.21617%
101	Urology	1,837,548	575,081	433	1,258,906	2,161	967	3.03190%
102	Transplantation Surgery	75,990	5,607	0	70,383	0	0	0.12538%
103	Breast Surgery	716,904	290,441	109	424,491	1,525	338	1.18287%
104	Colorectal Surgery	353,378	168,652	111	183,992	609	14	0.58306%
105	Hepatobiliary & Pancreatic Surgery	15,302	4,095	0	10,832	375	0	0.02525%
106	Upper Gastrointestinal Surgery	82,601	39,957	2	42,637	3	2	0.13629%
107	Vascular Surgery	338,693	143,663	30	194,724	266	10	0.55883%
110	Trauma & Orthopaedics	6,826,593	2,420,604	2,302	4,389,368	1,081	13,238	11.26366%
120	Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	2,703,987	1,144,683	267	1,555,635	1,402	2,000	4.46149%
130	Ophthalmology	5,796,592	1,603,810	240	4,186,093	5,865	584	9.56419%
140	Oral Surgery	1,026,969	462,573	75	563,973	47	301	1.69447%
141	Restorative Dentistry	371,799	78,094	0	293,681	24	0	0.61346%
142	Paediatric Dentistry	95,378	28,341	0	67,037	0	0	0.15737%
143	Orthodontics	745,725	82,859	15	662,777	74	0	1.23042%
144	Maxillo Facial Surgery	308,939	130,491	79	178,179	187	3	0.50974%
150	Neurosurgery	211,740	77,241	39	134,299	114	47	0.34936%
160	Plastic Surgery	877,820	236,458	33	639,683	1,312	334	1.44838%
161	Burns Care	26,589	5,585	0	21,004	0	0	0.04387%
170	Cardiothoracic Surgery	79,381	30,114	22	47,531	1,710	4	0.13098%
171	Paediatric Surgery	127,752	53,256	2	74,491	3	0	0.21079%
172	Cardiac Surgery	37,599	13,077	0	24,522	0	0	0.06204%
173	Thoracic Surgery	30,518	10,239	0	20,279	0	0	0.05035%
174	Cardiothoracic Transplantation	8,199	284	0	7,915	0	0	0.01353%
180	Accident & Emergency (A&E)	188,171	117,990	98	69,955	90	38	0.31048%
190	Anaesthetics	198,033	68,252	508	129,238	32	3	0.32675%
191	Pain Management	579,834	155,189	32	422,199	2,412	2	0.95671%
192	Critical Care Medicine	2,020	806	0	1,213	0	1	0.00333%
199	Non-UK Provider; specialty function not known, treatment mainly surgical	8,704	2,312	0	6,392	0	0	0.01436%
211	Paediatric Urology	12,738	5,174	0	7,564	0	0	0.02102%
212	Paediatric Transplantation Surgery	100	34	0	66	0	0	0.00016%
213	Paediatric Gastrointestinal Surgery	1,924	864	0	1,060	0	0	0.00317%

Treatment specialty, 2008-09

		All Attendances	Attended				Attended but first/ subsequent/ telephone unknown	Percentage of all attendances
			First appointment	First telephone consultation	Subsequent appointment	Subsequent telephone consultation		
214	Paediatric Trauma and Orthopaedics	62,886	22,955	1	39,930	0	0	0.10376%
215	Paediatric Ear Nose and Throat	42,849	15,851	2	26,996	0	0	0.07070%
216	Paediatric Ophthalmology	41,473	12,358	0	29,107	8	0	0.06843%
217	Paediatric Maxillo-facial Surgery	1,559	481	0	1,078	0	0	0.00257%
218	Paediatric Neurosurgery	7,395	1,584	0	5,811	0	0	0.01220%
219	Paediatric Plastic Surgery	22,138	5,510	0	16,628	0	0	0.03653%
220	Paediatric Burns Care	6,891	826	0	6,065	0	0	0.01137%
221	Paediatric Cardiac Surgery	1,216	625	0	591	0	0	0.00201%
222	Paediatric Thoracic Surgery	2,871	2,761	0	110	0	0	0.00474%
241	Paediatric Pain Management	25	11	0	14	0	0	0.00004%
242	Paediatric Intensive Care	26	4	0	22	0	0	0.00004%
251	Paediatric Gastroenterology	21,156	5,490	0	15,653	13	0	0.03491%
252	Paediatric Endocrinology	26,465	4,035	0	21,825	605	0	0.04367%
253	Paediatric Clinical Haematology	28,905	7,093	0	21,811	1	0	0.04769%
254	Paediatric Audiological Medicine	13,280	6,500	0	6,780	0	0	0.02191%
255	Paediatric Clinical Immunology and Allergy	7,145	2,831	0	4,314	0	0	0.01179%
256	Paediatric Infectious Diseases	1,788	376	0	1,412	0	0	0.00295%
257	Paediatric Dermatology	26,939	10,161	0	16,778	0	0	0.04445%
258	Paediatric Respiratory Medicine	25,410	5,104	0	20,304	2	0	0.04193%
259	Paediatric Nephrology	9,806	1,072	0	8,734	0	0	0.01618%
260	Paediatric Medical Oncology	17,888	790	0	17,097	1	0	0.02951%
261	Paediatric Metabolic Disease	4,167	250	0	3,917	0	0	0.00688%
262	Paediatric Rheumatology	11,749	1,918	1	9,813	17	0	0.01939%
280	Paediatric Interventional Radiology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00000%
290	Community Paediatrics	23,105	6,474	0	16,631	0	0	0.03812%
291	Paediatric Neuro-disability	5,819	1,075	0	4,504	240	0	0.00960%
300	General Medicine	1,825,499	565,030	3,936	1,255,653	580	300	3.01202%
301	Gastroenterology	978,355	331,035	355	645,526	1,431	8	1.61425%
302	Endocrinology	415,688	93,279	13	322,232	162	2	0.68587%
303	Clinical Haematology	1,398,072	161,916	1,284	1,233,303	1,492	77	2.30677%
304	Clinical Physiology	130,712	70,839	0	59,869	4	0	0.21567%
305	Clinical Pharmacology	29,724	2,560	0	27,163	0	1	0.04904%
306	Hepatology	107,568	17,761	3	89,800	4	0	0.17748%
307	Diabetic Medicine	731,575	106,602	413	621,949	2,596	15	1.20708%
308	Bone & Marrow Transplantation	9,146	277	0	8,869	0	0	0.01509%
309	Haemophilia	52,455	4,840	0	47,615	0	0	0.08655%
310	Audiological Medicine	349,634	147,483	761	199,294	2,095	1	0.57689%
311	Clinical Genetics	29,935	21,041	278	8,310	306	0	0.04939%
313	Clinical Immunology & Allergy	39,190	14,847	4	24,034	305	0	0.06466%
314	Rehabilitation	337,999	88,247	498	248,360	892	2	0.55769%
315	Palliative Medicine	39,847	9,464	31	30,332	20	0	0.06575%
316	Clinical Immunology	19,825	6,638	1	13,186	0	0	0.03271%

Treatment specialty, 2008-09

		All Attendances	Attended				Attended but first/ subsequent/ telephone unknown	Percentage of all attendances
			First appointment	First telephone consultation	Subsequent appointment	Subsequent telephone consultation		
317	Allergy	37,292	16,762	0	20,530	0	0	0.06153%
318	Intermediate Care	10,863	2,791	0	8,072	0	0	0.01792%
319	Respite Care	36	15	0	21	0	0	0.00006%
320	Cardiology	2,289,353	945,744	110	1,341,978	1,354	167	3.77736%
321	Paediatric Cardiology	77,191	24,158	0	53,031	0	2	0.12736%
322	Clinical Microbiology	2,175	377	0	1,798	0	0	0.00359%
323	Spinal Injuries	11,420	1,774	8	9,367	271	0	0.01884%
324	Anticoagulant Service	1,122,096	42,502	1	1,074,803	4,790	0	1.85142%
330	Dermatology	2,819,878	857,498	57	1,961,777	528	18	4.65271%
340	Respiratory Medicine (Thoracic Medicine)	998,868	314,735	72	682,358	1,550	153	1.64810%
341	Respiratory Physiology	75,572	22,730	3	52,826	13	0	0.12469%
350	Infectious Diseases	94,823	17,618	70	77,096	38	1	0.15645%
352	Tropical Medicine	6,657	4,575	0	2,082	0	0	0.01098%
360	Genitourinary Medicine	123,144	78,616	0	44,525	0	3	0.20318%
361	Nephrology	737,198	76,883	2	658,952	635	726	1.21635%
370	Medical Oncology	707,309	79,206	361	625,102	2,632	8	1.16704%
371	Nuclear Medicine	6,226	2,709	0	3,517	0	0	0.01027%
400	Neurology	945,712	395,417	101	549,657	516	21	1.56039%
401	Clinical Neuro-physiology	36,944	34,525	0	2,417	0	2	0.06096%
410	Rheumatology	1,620,046	321,358	51	1,295,407	2,955	275	2.67302%
420	Paediatrics	1,654,469	552,296	149	1,100,708	938	378	2.72982%
421	Paediatric Neurology	56,109	15,492	0	40,615	2	0	0.09258%
422	Neonatology	22,475	7,014	0	15,460	1	0	0.03708%
424	Well Babies	4,414	2,967	0	1,447	0	0	0.00728%
430	Geriatric Medicine	521,983	185,592	566	335,381	389	55	0.86126%
450	Dental Medicine Specialties	57,618	18,679	0	38,937	2	0	0.09507%
460	Medical Ophthalmology	76,476	30,517	0	45,795	163	1	0.12618%
499	Non-UK Provider; specialty function not known, treatment mainly medical	336	62	0	271	0	3	0.00055%
501	Obstetrics	2,924,681	904,721	101	2,018,872	955	32	4.82563%
502	Gynaecology	2,806,124	1,250,965	1,625	1,549,535	3,937	62	4.63002%
503	Gynaecological Oncology	81,765	28,343	40	53,349	33	0	0.13491%
560	Midwife episode	945,332	267,956	32	677,307	29	8	1.55977%
650	Physiotherapy	1,631,578	433,798	6,660	1,190,755	365	0	2.69205%
651	Occupational Therapy	115,968	34,105	0	81,861	2	0	0.19134%
652	Speech and Language Therapy	21,875	6,121	3	15,735	16	0	0.03609%
653	Podiatry	298,578	45,040	14	253,515	9	0	0.49264%
654	Dietetics	122,363	49,590	65	72,034	562	112	0.20190%
655	Orthoptics	152,118	35,399	0	116,714	5	0	0.25099%
656	Clinical Psychology	7,751	2,150	0	5,597	4	0	0.01279%
700	Learning Disability (previously MH)	64,788	10,896	198	52,965	725	4	0.10690%
710	Adult Mental Illness	1,120,835	192,316	10,723	897,808	19,395	593	1.84934%
711	Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	201,303	28,698	1,080	168,447	3,050	28	0.33214%

Treatment specialty, 2008-09

		All Attendances	First appointment	Attended First telephone consultation	Subsequent appointment	Subsequent telephone consultation	Attended but first/ subsequent/ telephone unknown	Percentage of all attendances
712	Forensic Psychiatry	7,589	1,592	47	5,862	88	0	0.01252%
713	Psychotherapy	41,979	5,348	4	36,611	15	1	0.06926%
715	Old Age Psychiatry	342,625	90,377	1,067	246,613	4,484	84	0.56532%
720	Eating Disorders	2,139	117	0	2,022	0	0	0.00353%
721	Addiction Services	26,506	3,176	0	23,330	0	0	0.04373%
722	Liaison Psychiatry	125	47	0	78	0	0	0.00021%
723	Psychiatric Intensive Care	1	1	0	0	0	0	0.00000%
724	Perinatal Psychiatry	77	8	0	69	0	0	0.00013%
800	Clinical Oncology (previously Radiotherapy)	1,516,193	173,452	19	1,342,078	639	5	2.50167%
811	Interventional Radiology	134,586	69,810	46	63,905	399	426	0.22206%
812	Diagnostic Imaging	151,062	131,585	0	19,477	0	0	0.24925%
822	Chemical Pathology	72,999	22,092	0	50,903	3	1	0.12045%
840	Audiology	133,281	53,984	85	77,827	1,385	0	0.21991%

HES 2008-09¹ Outpatient Data Quality Note

The data quality note will be updated in the event of issues arising post-publication. A summary of changes made will appear in the table below. For the most recent version of this data quality note, please refer to the [HESonline website](http://www.hesonline.nhs.uk) [http://www.hesonline.nhs.uk].

Version control	
Date	Summary of Update
21/10/2009	2008-09 Outpatient Data Quality Note published

The following issues have been identified in the 2008-09 outpatient data:

Developing Data Set

The outpatient data set is a developing data set which has a number of continuing issues regarding quality and coverage of certain key fields.

The latest information on these issues can be found on the [HESonline website](http://www.hesonline.nhs.uk/Ease/servlet/ContentServer?siteID=1937&categoryID=898) [http://www.hesonline.nhs.uk/Ease/servlet/ContentServer?siteID=1937&categoryID=898].

Known provider issues: specific issues

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust (RYG)

Attendance Type

Description

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust (RYG) have notified that there is corrupt data with their submission of Attendance Type.

Impact: there are 5000 corrupt records within this field. This Trust's data should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Mersey Care NHS Trust (RW4)

Attendance Type

Mersey Care NHS Trust (RW4) has notified that there are data issues with their Attendance type field due to technical errors in submitting the data.

Description

There is no differentiation between new and subsequent outpatient appointments and as a result in 2008-09 99% of all attendances are shown as first attendances at this trust compared to 2007-08 where approximately 30% were first attendances and the remainder were subsequent attendances.

Impact: this Trust's data should therefore be interpreted with caution.

¹ Data submitted to SUS by 12 June 2009.

Known provider issues: coverage issues

The following organisations have shortfalls; their data should be interpreted with caution

Organisations with shortfalls / missing data			
Organisation name	Org. code	Months affected	Approx. no. of records missing
Havering PCT	5A4	Sept	700
Kingston PCT	5A5	Oct - Dec	1,500
Barking And Dagenham PCT	5C2	Sept	4,000
South Birmingham PCT	5M1	Dec - Mar	60,000
Coventry Teaching PCT	5MD	Jan - Mar	4,500
Central Lancashire PCT	5NG	Jan - Mar	450
Northamptonshire Teaching PCT	5PD	Jul - Mar	1,800
Mid Essex PCT	5PX	Aug - Mar	400
Oxfordshire PCT	5QE	Aug - Mar	2,700
Nations Healthcare	NTA	May - Jun	20,000
Walton Centre for Neurology And Neurosurgery NHS Trust	RET	Oct, Jan - Mar	30,000
South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS	RQY	Jan - Feb	14,000
Suffolk Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	RT6	Nov	1,200
Humber Mental Health Teaching NHS Trust	RV9	Oct - Mar	5,000
Devon Partnership NHS Trust	RWV	Nov - Mar	80
Kent And Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust	RXY	Jul - Mar	36,000
North East Lincolnshire Care Trust Plus	TAN	Nov - Mar	4,500

Kingston PCT (5A5)

Description

Kingston PCT (5A5) has very high counts for January to March 2009. This is currently being investigated

Impact: this Trust's data should therefore be interpreted with caution. Please be aware the increase in January to March 2009 may affect national or regional figures.

North Lincolnshire PCT (5EF)

Description

This Trust submitted data up to May 2008. Activity for the rest of the 2008-09 year is recorded under Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (RXE).

Impact: this Trust's data should therefore be interpreted with caution.