Community Services Data Set (CSDS)

Key contact details:

To discuss any aspect of the CSDS dataset you can contact the NHS Digital team via phone 0300 303 5678 or email enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk

CSDS data dictionary:

As a secondary use dataset, CSDS reuses clinical and operational data for purposes other than direct care. CSDS sets out national definitions for the extraction of data about children and adults, including: personal and demographic, social and personal circumstances, breastfeeding and nutrition, care event and screening activity, diagnosis including long-term conditions and disabilities, scored assessments. These activities could take place in settings such as health centres, sure start centres, day care facilities, schools, community centres, or a patient's own home.

CSDS information is captured from a wide variety of publicly funded community services in England. Providers could be from foundation or non-foundation trusts. Whilst the dataset does not include a full list of community services providers, the number of organisations submitting data to CSDS is increasing. By September 2019, the CSDS dataset included information on 141 different providers in England.

CSDS v1.5 is the current version of the dataset which includes data from July 2020. CSDS v1.6 will go live for local data collection from January 2023. Further information and documentation relating to CSDS v1.6 is available here.

Accessing CSDS data:

CSDS publish a number of standard analyses on the NHS Digital website. All publications relating to statistics produced from the CSDS dataset can be found here. In addition, there are also CSDS supplementary reports and monthly dashboards accessible via NHS Digital.

Users who require bespoke analyses can request extracts from CSDS tailored to their requirements. To do this, a Data Access Request via NHS Digital (details below) is required.

Further information, tools and guidance on accessing CSDS data can be found here.

Data Access Request Service (DARS):

Step 1.) Enquiry: Not all enquiries progress to the application stage, it may be that requirements can be fulfilled through existing data published on the NHS Digital website. To speak to the NHS Digital team about your data requirements you can get in touch using the key contact details at the top of this page.

The pre-application checklist and further guidance on completing a successful application can be found here.

Step 2.) Making an application: The application process sets out the nature of the requested data and the purpose for it being requested. Prior to making an application, it is important to note that your organisation must have a valid Data Sharing Framework Contract in place. If you are unsure whether your organisation has a current contract, contact NHS Digital on the phone number or email address listed at the top of this document.

[DARS documents and guidance can be accessed here](). Ensure you submit the application with the required information and supporting documentation via the DARS online portal.

General tips for all DARS applications:

- Be transparent – be clear and consistent.
- Be precise – list your purpose, explain acronyms and assume that the application will be read in isolation to other documents. Your purpose should explain: WHY you need data; HOW you will turn the data into products that generate benefits to Health and Social Care systems.
- Ensure you have legal basis – a legal basis must be in place to allow NHS Digital to receive, process and disseminate the data. It is your responsibility to ensure you have these before submitting.
- Learn from others.
- Justify any identifiable or sensitive data, and that you have sought to minimise the amount of data required.

Once your application has been submitted you will be allocated a case officer who will review your application and if necessary schedule an appointment to discuss anything outstanding that must be completed for your application to progress.

Step 3.) Approval: DARS undergo stringent review by staff and independent groups against published criteria. The application is reviewed by the Independent Group Advising on the Release of Data (IGARD). The panel consists of independent specialists and lay members of the public. If GP data is also included in the application an additional review is completed by the Professional Advisory Group (PAG).

The application process is expected to take approximately 30 working days.

Step 4.) Access: Once a DARS application is approved, the data will be made available by Secure Electronic File Transfer (SEFT) or through the Data Access Environment (DAE). If via SEFT, NHS Digital will provide a user name and password for the SEFT service.

User access agreements:

NHS Digital data is never provided without a contract. All releases are covered by two contracts:

Data Sharing Framework Contract with NHS Digital – this creates a framework of legally binding terms and conditions that applies to each and every agreement with NHS Digital to share data with the digital recipient. An application cannot be progressed until an organisation has signed a contractually binding DSFC.

Data Sharing Agreement – relates to the specific use of data, covering the data required, minimisation, purpose, funding, etc. Once all reviews of a data application are complete then a contractual DSA is issued. The DSA is electronically signed by NHS Digital in the DARS online system. The applicant will review the agreement, provide a PO number and then electronically sign the agreement. The data is then produced, reviewed and signed off by NHS digital. The data will be made available once the data sharing agreement is signed and the data production process has commenced.

NHS Digital carry out regular data sharing audits to check that data users are meeting the obligations in their contract and data sharing agreement.

Cost of access:

Charges are in place to cover the costs of managing the application, processing data and providing access.

NHS Digital do not charge for data but do apply charges to cover the cost of processing and delivering the service. Costs are broadly determined by the amount of effort and approvals required. Actual costs will be agreed during the application process.

Charges are calculated on the following components; type of application, the volume of data requested, the frequency that you require data to be disseminated.

A new application will cost around £1,000, with additional charges applied depending on the above components listed. Charges will range widely depending on the data required, example costings provided by NHS Digital show charges ranging from £5,000 - £28,000. [Example costings and further information can be found here.](#)

Additional information:

Training: Free data awareness training – The Safe Data Access Professionals Group helps share expertise, best practice and knowledge between organisations. This is aimed at promoting best practice when generating Safe Outputs in Safe Settings. These free data awareness training courses and modules provide users with best practice information on working with statistical data.

Further information and access to training resources can be found in the 'further information' section at the bottom of the following [webpage](#).

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