Diagnostic Imaging Data Set (DID)

Key contact details:

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

DID data dictionary:

The DID is a central collection of detailed information about diagnostic imaging tests carried out on NHS patients, extracted from local radiology information systems and submitted monthly. It captures information about referral source and patient type, details of the test, demographic information, plus items about waiting times for each diagnostic imaging event. The DID enables analysis of demographic and geographic variation in access to different test types and different providers.

Further information and a full description of each of the fields available in the DID, can be found on the DID data dictionary tab.

Accessing DID data:

All NHS providers are required to submit diagnostic imaging data to NHS Digital, collected on behalf of NHS England. The dataset includes information on imaging tests carried out from April 2012. It does not include the images that were produced as a result of these tests.

Aggregated data at Trust level is available via NHS England and non-patient identifiable data can be accessed by NHS staff and other authorised persons using another online platform. Details of where to find and how to access this data can be found here.

Detailed data, including that which is linked through Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), is only available through the NHS Digital DARS process, outlined below.

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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