



## BACKGROUND QUALITY REPORT: MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING DISABILITY TABLES

<b>Introduction</b>	<p>Principle 4 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics states that statistical methods should be consistent with scientific principles and internationally recognised best practices, and be fully documented. Quality should be monitored and assured taking account of internationally agreed practices.</p> <p>The full text of the Code is available at: <a href="http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-ofpractice/index.html">http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-ofpractice/index.html</a></p> <p>Each Official and National Statistics output produced by Hospital Information Branch (HIB) within the Department of Health (DoH) contains key quality information in respect of the specific content of the statistical output. This information is provided in the definitions, notes to tables or notes to editors.</p>
<b>Publication</b>	Mental Health and Learning Disability Tables
<b>Department responsible</b>	Department of Health
<b>Release Date</b>	Annual
<b>Web Link to Publications</b>	<a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/doh-statistics-and-research-mental-health-and-learning-disabilities/mental-health-and-learning-disability-statistics">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/doh-statistics-and-research-mental-health-and-learning-disabilities/mental-health-and-learning-disability-statistics</a>
<b>Background</b>	<p>Information is presented on compulsory admissions under the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986 and the Mental Illness and Learning Disability (MILD) Census.</p> <p>Information on compulsory admissions is sourced from a quarterly return (KH15/KH15b) from HSC Trusts and collects the number of patients admitted to hospital who were detained at admission under the Mental Health Order by age group and gender.</p> <p>The MILD Census is carried out annually, and is a count of all mental illness and learning disability patients who are resident in hospital or on home leave on 17<sup>th</sup> February each year.</p>

	<p>Information is collected from each hospital on the basis of age, length of stay and bed type.</p> <p>The HSC Trusts are provided with technical guidance outlining instructions for recording, collecting and the submission of the mental health and learning disability statistics, which can be accessed at the links below:</p> <p><a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/admissions-under-mental-health-ni-order-1986-legal-status-kh15kh15b">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/admissions-under-mental-health-ni-order-1986-legal-status-kh15kh15b</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/mental-illnesslearning-disability-mild-census-return">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/mental-illnesslearning-disability-mild-census-return</a></p>
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## Dimensions of Quality

Dimension	Assessment
<b>Relevance</b>	<p><b>The degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.</b></p> <p>The tables detail compulsory admissions each year under the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986, providing an insight into those detained by gender and age group. Information is presented on the last five years to indicate demand for compulsory admissions.</p> <p>The tables also provide a count of all mental illness and learning disability patients resident in hospital or on home leave at the time of the Census. The snapshot on the 17<sup>th</sup> February each year provides a useful insight into the number and age groups of patients being treated/cared for in an inpatient setting.</p> <p>The length of time which patients have been resident in the mental health/learning disability hospital is useful in determining the long stay population (i.e. those patients who have been in hospital for a year or more) and the bed type is a helpful indication on the type of treatment/care being provided.</p> <p>The main customers of mental health and learning disability statistics are policy officials in the DoH's Secondary Care Directorate and the Mental Health/Disability/Older People Directorate.</p> <p>Information from the MILD Census is essential for the production of an Annual Report on the Development of Services for People with a Learning Disability or Mental Illness in Northern Ireland which are required by the Disabled Persons (NI) Act 1989 (Section 10).</p> <p>Other potential users include health care professionals, academics, Health &amp; Social Care stakeholders, media and the general public.</p>

**Accuracy and Reliability**

**The proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.**

In terms of compulsory admissions data, coverage is inclusive of all adults and children detained under the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986, therefore, there is no error associated with statistical sampling. The MILD census is a snapshot in time of all residents, including those on home leave on the census day, in mental health and learning disability hospitals across NI. As a census, no estimates are produced and issues of sampling error is irrelevant.

The HSC Trusts are provided with technical guidance outlining instructions for recording, collecting and the submission of the mental health and learning disability statistics, which can be accessed at the links below:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/admissions-under-mental-health-ni-order-1986-legal-status-kh15kh15b>

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/mental-illnesslearning-disability-mild-census-return>

This guidance indicates that information should be returned quarterly (compulsory admissions) or annually (MILD census) by Trusts in respect of services for which they have responsibility.

HIB will then liaise with each HSC Trust regarding any queries which result from validation of the data.

HIB validates mental health and learning disability information by:

- Performing trend analysis on previous quarter's/year's data; and,
- Identifying outlying data on the number of compulsory admissions or inpatients.

Any irregularities identified are queried with the relevant HSC Trust for response. The HSC Trust are asked to provide a response to the query and confirm if the data is correct. If not correct, the HSC Trust will indicate the correct information and an explanation for the error, then update their system and submit an amended information return to HIB.

In addition to this, HSC Trusts have their own internal quality assurance checks and carry out data validation checks to ensure consistency in the data produced by HIB. Any data quality issues are dealt with reactively and resolved as they

	<p>arise. HSC Trusts have dedicated data quality resources to proactively manage data quality challenges across the organisations.</p>
<p><b>Timeliness and Punctuality</b></p>	<p><b>Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.</b></p> <p>The MILD Census is conducted on the 17<sup>th</sup> February each year to provide a snapshot of the resident population of mental health and learning disability patients. HSC Trusts are given approximately one month to submit their completed census return. Four quarterly information returns on compulsory admissions are also used within the publication, these are aggregated and cover the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March. HIB publish a 'Submission Timetable' quarterly to notify HSC Trust staff of the submission deadlines for each return. Delayed submissions are normally due to a lack of resources or validation issues within HSC Trusts.</p> <p>The Mental Health and Learning Disability Tables is normally published within 5 months of the reference period to which the compulsory admissions data refer.</p> <p>As per the requirements of the UK Statistics Authority the month of publication is announced a year in advance and the day of publication one month in advance of publication (available on <a href="https://www.gov.uk/">https://www.gov.uk/</a>).</p> <p>Also on the DoH website the 'Statistical Release Calendar', provides twelve months advance notice of releases; <a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/statistical-releases-calendar">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/statistical-releases-calendar</a></p> <p>In the majority of cases, the target publication date is met. However, in the event of a change to a pre-announced release date, the publication calendar is amended as soon as possible.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility and Clarity</b></p>	<p><b>Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.</b></p> <p>The annual 'Mental Health and Learning Disability Tables' is a National Statistics publication available as downloadable Excel Tables, without commentary. The tables are published on the DoH website at the following link:</p>

	<p><a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/doh-statistics-and-research-mental-health-and-learning-disabilities/mental-health-and-learning-disability-statistics">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/doh-statistics-and-research-mental-health-and-learning-disabilities/mental-health-and-learning-disability-statistics</a></p> <p>Appendices to the tables includes notes for readers which cover: guidance on using the data, including definitions on important terms and phrases; background to National Statistics and information on the Mental Health and Learning Disability Hospitals. It also provides important links to additional guidance for readers on the recording, collection and submission of data.</p> <p>Once published, a web-link to the annual publication is circulated to relevant colleagues across the HSC Trusts/Board and to those named on our circulation lists.</p>
<p><b>Coherence and Comparability</b></p>	<p><b>Coherence is the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar. Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain.</b></p> <p>Within the ‘Hospital Statistics: Inpatient &amp; Day Case Activity Northern Ireland’ publication information is available on the Mental Health and Learning Disability Programme of Cares. Information is presented on available beds, occupied beds, occupancy rates and inpatient admissions. The publication is available at:</p> <p><a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/inpatient-and-day-case-activity">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/inpatient-and-day-case-activity</a></p> <p>The inpatient admissions in the later publication refer to total numbers admitted across a financial year whereas the MILD Census data presented in the ‘Mental Health and Learning Disability Tables’ is a snapshot of inpatients on the 17<sup>th</sup> February each year. The information sourced from the KH15/KH15b and used in the ‘Mental Health and Learning Disability Tables’ refers to the number of patients admitted to hospital who were detained at admission each financial year, whether or not they had been subsequently discharged. It does <u>not</u> include those admitted to hospital voluntarily and therefore will differ in this respect to the inpatient admissions presented in ‘Hospital Statistics: Inpatient &amp; Day Case Activity Northern Ireland’ publication.</p> <p>Comparisons can be made over time as data from previous years is available in the tables to allow trend analysis and similar publication formats are available from 2009/10 onwards. Historically this statistical information, including detailed commentary, was published as the ‘Hospital Statistics: Mental Health and Learning Disability’ publication. However, following a National Statistics Consultation in October 2015, it was agreed</p>

	<p>to discontinue this publication and replace it with the current set of downloadable EXCEL data tables (no commentary).</p> <p>All data submitted by the five HSC Trusts for this publication are comparable although consideration may need to be given to the different population sizes of each HSC Trust. Comparisons with other UK jurisdictions are not straight forward as the Mental Health and Learning Disability programme of care operates within different legislative frameworks across devolved administrations.</p>
<p><b>Trade-offs between Output Quality Components</b></p>	<p><b>Trade-offs are the extent to which different aspects of quality are balanced against each other.</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions</b></p>	<p><b>The processes for finding out about users and uses, and their views on the statistical products.</b></p> <p>Data presented in this publication helps to meet the information needs of a wide range of internal and external users.</p> <p>Within DoH, the Mental Health and Learning Disability statistics are used by policy officials to monitor the need for compulsory admissions and the demand for mental health and learning disability beds. The statistics are used to inform and monitor related policy, for Ministerial briefing and to respond to Private Office enquiries and parliamentary/ assembly questions.</p> <p>The Mental Health and Learning Disability Tables are also used by researchers looking at HSC Trust performance and by service users and other members of the general public to hold HSC Trusts and government to account.</p>
<p><b>Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden</b></p>	<p>Currently HIB do not have access to HSC Trust information systems therefore HSC Trust staff must provide HIB with the data requested. The information is submitted electronically either via the HIB Data Collection System on the DoH Extranet site or via email on a pre-defined Excel template. Whilst the information is returned to the Department specifically for the Mental Health and Learning Disability publication much of it would be collected by the HSC Trusts for their internal management information. In this regard the Census and required information returns do not create substantial additional burden.</p> <p>The production of the annual tables has been streamlined as historically the statistical information was published in a much lengthier format with detailed commentary. The production of the current format is much more efficient.</p>

**Confidentiality,  
Transparency  
and Security**

**The procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.**

The information collected is at a summary level and as such does not include personal data. The MILD Census is an aggregated Excel return that is submitted by e-mail to the Department. The compulsory admissions data is part collected on an aggregated Excel return and in part through the online HIB data collection system, which provides a secure link between HSC Trusts and the DoH.

The data from the HIB data collection system is extracted by statisticians in HIB and stored in a secure drive along with the Excel returns before being processed and validated.

The information is presented at hospital or Trust level and treated for confidentiality prior to release. HIB's 'Statistical Policy Statement on Confidentiality' can be found in the Statistics Charter at:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/doh-statistics-charter>