

Patient Ethnicity Data - Conversational Guidance for Data Collection

This is guidance for those within the practice that collect patient data. As you may be aware, the recording of data on patients' ethnicity is mandatory. If there are patient records with these details outstanding, this information needs to be collected, either in-person, by phone or online, when patients contact or visit your practice.

Ethnic background can be a source of concern for some patients and it is important to approach them sensitively and fully address any concerns they have with the recording of their ethnicity. Here are some key questions that may arise and further, some resources you can immediately utilise if there are any language barriers.

Why is it important?

We need to log your ethnicity as accurately as possible on your patient record. Currently, we do not have any/sufficient information about your ethnic background, please could we record this now/today? By providing your data, we can track trends in patient outcomes and make continuous improvements to the care you receive.

What information do we need?

The NHS needs to improve the capture of patients' ethnicity data to enable us to provide the correct services for our population. This can include everything from funding to specialist care to ensuring we have culturally sensitive resources available.





How do you identify

What would you be comfortable with us recording your ethnicity as?

If there isn't a description that you're happy with, we can record your ethnicity using the 'other' box.

Is there anything else you would like us to note regarding your ethnicity?

Discrimination

The purpose of adding your ethnicity to your patient record is to support us in providing the best service to meet your needs.

Your data will never be used to refuse you services that you are entitled to. We will never provide an inferior/sub-standard service based on your ethnicity.

The NHS values diversity and equity as its core mission and will continue to uphold this in the future.



Immigration status

No immigration checks will be carried out when you provide your ethnicity information. Your current immigration status will not affect what services you can access - however some services may come at an additional cost.

Further advice

Some conversations (especially regarding immigration) can be uncomfortable for patients. Consider the following adjustments to improve the patient's experience:

1

Hold conversations away from the main reception/waiting area – if there is a private room or an area that is less exposed, patients will be more comfortable asking questions and giving personal information

2

Avoid 'ambushing' the patient during what may be a sensitive time (e.g. they've received bad news about their health/the health of loved ones). Instead, implement a system whereby GPs can signal it's safe and appropriate to discuss administrative concerns with the patient.

3

Know when to pause – if the patient becomes aggressive or shows clear discomfort it's ok to pause and suggest that the conversation can be revisited at a later date.

4

Acknowledge the patient's concerns – reassure patients that you understand their concerns and take them seriously. The patient's questions should not be dismissed or downplayed; using language such as "I can understand your concerns", "that's a good question to ask" etc. helps to show your empathy towards the patient.

5

Address any questions or concerns they have beyond the collection of their ethnicity information. If they veer off into other subjects, it's important to support and respond appropriately even if you're focused on getting their data.

Coding

The most common ethnic categories are listed on the table, but all coding information can be found online:

www.datadictionary.nhs.uk/data_elements/ethnic_category.html

Default codes

The code of 99 'Not Known' should only be used if a patient has not completed the question during registration/not been given the opportunity to state their ethnicity. Please note code 99 is a default code and will be noted on the patient record if no other entry is made. If the patient has ticked they do not wish to disclose, please use code Z as they had the opportunity to disclose but actively chose not to.

If the patient does not identify with any of the ethnic categories listed, they can select '**Other Ethnic Groups - Any other ethnic group**' (Code S) and any details can be added into the free text box.

Code	Description
99	Not known (Default Code)
Z	Not Stated (Person has been given the opportunity to state their ethnic category but chose not to)
A	White - British
B	White - Irish
C	White – Any other White background
D	Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
E	Mixed - White and Black African
F	Mixed - White and Asian
G	Mixed - Any other mixed background
H	Asian or Asian British - Indian
J	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
K	Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
L	Asian or Asian British - Any other Asian background
M	Black or Black British - Caribbean
N	Black or Black British - African
P	Black or Black British - Any other Black background
R	Other Ethnic Groups - Chinese
S	Other Ethnic Groups - Any other ethnic group