

Equality and Diversity Council Meeting Paper
20th October 2015
Data Measurement Subgroup Update

Purpose and context

An agreed priority of the EDC is to focus upon ensuring the availability of, and access to, the data and tools required to measure our progress in advancing equality and tackling health inequalities. In taking forward this priority, a data measurement subgroup was established with members drawn from key partner organisations.

Actions taken to date

- Work on the development of an Information Standard on sexual orientation data monitoring is underway, with the scheduled completion date of this phase being the end of March 2016.
- Work to scope the development of a unified equality data information standard for all nine equality characteristics is underway.
- NHS England continues to work with the DH to further develop the NHS Outcomes Framework so that a range of the indicators can be health inequality assessed.

Current position

Building upon the momentum of the sexual orientation data collection Information Standard, work to scope the development of a unified Information Standard, that will bring together all equality characteristics, is in progress.

The option of batching all equality characteristics together and taking this batch through the standards process in one go was agreed at the previous Data Subgroup meeting. On this basis, an appraisal of financial implications associated with the development of: (a) a full Information Standard and (b) a fundamental Information Standard, is underway.

A full information standard will require updating of certain current data standards and data sets and, potentially, some systems in NHS and Social Care based upon the recommended questions and response codes. A fundamental information standard would not require changes to systems and data sets, rather, it would simply provide direction to local organisations on the equality questions and response codes to use when collecting this data from patients and staff.

A fundamental standard would result in no central change to data sets, and therefore there will be a risk that central and commissioner monitoring would not be possible.

The outcome of the financial appraisal of the options will be of much benefit in understanding exactly what that cost burden is likely to be; this will be reported back to the EDC in January 2016. At the same time, and as required, work is being undertaken to secure the overall Sponsor for this work.

Working with DH, we will continue to develop the reporting of health inequalities and sub-national breakdowns of some of the health inequalities indicators in the NHS Outcomes Framework.

Key risks

Consequential risks of not taking this work forward include:

- a lack of direction for NHS organisations re: data collections to help support the meeting of legal duties with regard to equality and health inequalities;
- a failure to improve our understanding of how people's characteristics can affect their access to services, experiences and health outcomes;
- a lack of evidence to help plan equitable services for diverse populations and organise workplaces that are accessible and free from discrimination.

Next steps

- Continue work on developing an Information Standard for sexual.
- Work with the HSCIC to undertake the appraisal of financial implications for the development of a full and a fundamental information standard.
- Develop a work programme for taking a data collection Information Standard for the other equality characteristics through the standards process.
- NHS England to continue to work with partner organisations on the alignment and breakdown of national health inequalities indicators.

Recommendation and action requested

For the EDC to note the above next steps.

John Holden

On behalf of the Data Measurement Subgroup of the EDC

October 2015

[Members of the Data Measurement Subgroup are: John Holden (NHS England) (Chair), Habib Naqvi (NHS England), Ray Avery (NHS England), Ruth Passman (NHS England), Anne Griffin (DH), Catherine Gregson (PHE), Gerry Firkins (HSCIC), Cath Chilcott (HSCIC), Neil Churchill (NHS England), Isabelle Hunt (HSCIC), Justine Fitzpatrick (PHE), Mary Lewis, Alastair Lipp (NHS England), Paul Martin (LGBT Foundation), Scott Reid (NHS England), Katie Robinson (NHS England), Rosemary Main (DH), Tom Hennell (PHE), Kieron Walsh (HSCIC), Phillip Wilcock (NHS England).]