Guidance on the submission of NHS dental service Friends and Family Test data

NHS England and NHS Improvement

Contents

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Summary

1. This guidance sets out the arrangements for dental practice staff submitting monthly NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) data to NHS England.

2. The guidance relates specifically to FFT responses from patients who have NHS funded care or treatment. Dental practices may wish to use FFT to gather feedback from non-NHS funded patients, but they should only submit data based on NHS patients.

3. The data will be collected by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA).

4. Detailed technical guidance on how to enter and submit data will be made available here: Friends and family test | NHSBSA

5. Dental FFT submissions will be open from the beginning of each month to facilitate the submission of data collected in the previous month. For example, data collected in July 2021 will be submitted in August 2021.

6. General guidance on how to implement FFT can be found here: www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/using-the-fft-to-improve-patient-experience-guidance-v2.pdf

7. The FFT question: "Overall, how was your experience of our service?" has six possible response categories:

    - *Very good,*
    - *good,*
    - *neither good nor poor,*
    - *poor,*
    - *very poor, and*
    - *don't know.*

8. Practices are allowed flexibility in how they make FFT available to their patients, which can be categorised as:

    - *handwritten,*
    - *telephone call,*
    - *tablet/kiosk,*
    - *SMS/text message,*
    - *smartphone app or online, or*
    - *other.*

Data to submit

9. Each month, contracts are required to submit (for NHS patients only):

    - the practice location id
    - the total number of responses in each response category
    - the number of responses collected through each collection method.

10. Only one submission is expected for each practice identifier (location id) per contract per month. Where more than one submission has been made for the month the latest submission will be used for reporting and publication purposes.

11. Free text comments are not submitted to NHS England.

Timeline

12. Organisations can submit data as soon as they are ready after the month end and will have until the **twelfth working day** (inclusive) to make their submission. Future submission dates are provided in Annex 1.

Submission route

13. Practices are required to submit data through the NHS Business Services Authority survey portal.

Data submission process Q&A

What will happen after I submit the data?

14. NHS England will publish the data that is submitted by the practice, except where publication of low numbers would risk individual patients being identified (ie when there are fewer than five responses). In this case the data will be suppressed and an * will appear in place of the data.

15. NHS England will publish the data on the NHS England statistical pages, the month following the data submission: www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/friends-and-family-test/friends-and-family-test-data/.

16. Only one submission is expected for each practice identifier (location id) per contract per month. Where more than one submission has been made for the month the latest submission will be used for reporting and publication purposes. Once published there will be no provision to revise data. The focus is on practices improving the quality of future submissions.

17. Where we do not receive a data submission from a practice, we will publish the words: "no data". This will be clearly distinct from a practice that submits fewer than five responses.

18. Where data appears to be unfeasible (for example, if it is significantly higher than is plausible - see below), our intention is to publish the data but highlight it in italics.

Will any validation of the data be undertaken?

19. Missing submissions and abnormalities will be flagged in the data when it is published. Regional teams will contact practices where there are issues with the data submitted to enquire if any assistance is required. Monthly data will not be changed once it is published. The focus will be on providing better data in future.

How will data with issues be handled when the data is published?

20. If we do not receive data from a practice, we will enter the words "no data" in the publication. Data that is deemed to be unfeasible will be highlighted in italics.

What is an unfeasible value?

21.   An unfeasible value is where the monthly number of responses is greater than the number of patients seen in the previous year.

Do I need to make a submission every month even if I have got a low number of responses?

22.   Yes, practices should submit monthly data even if the number of responses is low.

How will low response numbers be handled in the national publication?

23.   Where a practice submits fewer than five responses we will not publish the numbers, in order to avoid the risk of publication of patient identifiable data. It is still important to submit the data, as this will demonstrate that the contractual requirement to implement FFT is being met.

Who do I contact if I have any additional questions?

24.   Queries should be sent to: england.friendsandfamilytest@nhs.net

How do I access the data submission website?

25.   The submission system, and instructions, will be accessible through the NHSBSA website, here: Friends and family test | NHSBSA

Annex 1: Future submission dates

26. Organisations will be able to submit their data from the first working day of the month following the month of the data collection. The deadline for submissions is the twelfth working day (inclusive) of the month, following the data collection period.

27. Dates for the first year are shown in the table below.

FFT feedback month	Submission closure (twelfth working day of the month)
July 2021	17 August 2021
August 2021	16 September 2021
September 2021	18 October 2021
October 2021	16 November 2021
November 2021	16 December 2021
December 2021	19 January 2022
January 2022	16 February 2022
February 2022	16 March 2022
March 2022	20 April 2022
April 2022	18 May 2022
May 2022	20 June 2022
June 2022	18 July 2022