

Revision on 22nd May 2020

Northern Ireland Primary Care Optometry Enhanced Services – Notification of revision to outcome figures following a Level 1 or Level 2 Local Enhanced Service (LES I or LES II) assessment.

Following publication of the Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2018/19, a processing error relating to the definition of historical Northern Ireland Primary Care Optometry Enhanced Services outcomes following assessment was identified.

The table that has been revised showed the outcome following an assessment at either a LES I or LES II appointment and was derived from the “Referred to” variable in the data. The three outcomes presented in the table were “Referral to a Glaucoma Clinic”, “Referral to a GP” and “Discharged”.

Through engagement with stakeholders involved in the operation of the scheme, it has been determined that the variable “Referred To” used to determine the outcome following an assessment at either a LES I or LES II appointment should have been interpreted as the method of onward referral and not final outcome of referral for the patient.

All patients with an onward referral would have been referred to Hospital Eye Services (HES) (in some cases for LES I, this may be to a LES II accredited optometrist) however some cases are referred directly and some would have been referred via their GP, so rather than “Referral to GP” it should be interpreted as “Referred to HES via GP”.

The Ophthalmic Department within the HSC Business Services Organisation advised that the figures should be revised to show if patients were either referred for ongoing treatment or did not get an onward referral. They have advised against splitting the data based on the method of onward referral due to concerns about data quality in some of the earlier years of the series.

The overall total did not change however the sub-categories have been revised to reflect the change in interpretation.

Below outlines the new sub-category breakdowns:

- LES I
 - Referral to HES or Level II accredited optometrist
 - No onward referral for LES I
- LES II
 - Referral to HES
 - No onward referral for LES II

In addition, a data import error into the central repository was discovered regarding the payments made to LES I in March 2019. The correct numbers of assessments were included in the overall total for that financial year however the variable “Referred To” had been imported showing all cases to be “NULL” which had been interpreted as meaning the cases had no onward referral. Following a data reload, the 117 null cases were correctly populated with the following breakdown: 12 Referred to HES via GP, 13 referred to HES and 92 No onward referrals.

The following documents were affected:

Summary Report:

- Changes to graphic, figure 3.6 and minor change to associated text on page 27.

Tables Annex 3:

- Change to the sub categories in table 3.15 and associated figures within them.

All of the revisions pertaining to the above have now been made and a revised 2018/19 annual report released.

Revision on 16th August 2019:

Community Pharmacies – Notification of Revision of Incorrect Historic Count Figures

Following publication of the Family Practitioner Services Statistics for Northern Ireland 2018/19, a data quality issue came to light with regard to the Community Pharmacy figures. This issue originated from the database used to compile the statistics where pharmacy identifier codes were sometimes reused whenever a pharmacy closed. In some cases, this has resulted in information for closed pharmacies being overwritten meaning that not all pharmacies were included in counts for years 2008/09 to 2013/14. The identified differences in counts at NI level range from 5% in 2008/09 to less than 1% in 2013/14 and no change in subsequent years. This issue also had a small impact on aggregated volumes of prescription items dispensed at pharmacy level with differences again ranging from 5% in 2008/09 to less than 1% in 2013/14 and little to no change being shown from 2014/15 to 2018/19.

The following documents were affected:

Summary Report:

- Pharmaceutical Services Key Facts (page 5) - Last bullet point relating to average monthly dispensing volume per community pharmacy
- Text on Page 33 relating to historic growth in pharmacy numbers
- Changes to graphic, figure 4.2 and associated text on page 34
- Minor changes to figures 4.3, 4.4 and associated text on page 35
- Minor change to figure 4.7 and amended associated text on page 37.

Tables Annex 4:

- Changes to pharmacy counts on tables 4.11 to 4.13, for years 2008/09 – 2013/14
- Changes to monthly dispensing figures in table 4.13
- Minor changes to average monthly dispensing volumes in tables 4.14a to c
- Minor changes to average annual dispensing volumes for Northern Ireland in tables 4.15, 4.16 and 4.18.

Infographic – Change to number of average items dispensed per pharmacy in 2008/09.

All of the revisions pertaining to the above have now been made and a revised 2018/19 annual report released.

In addition to this, in response to a request from a user and to aid interpretation, further clarity has been provided on the comparison of average monthly dispensing volumes per pharmacy across the UK on page 37 of the summary report.