

1. Accessing Existing Quantitative Data on Systems – Age, Gender and Postcode

Monitoring of the usage of health services by the different Section 75 groups is a key aspect of the equality information agenda. Based on the fact that minimal information is available beyond Age and Gender the EISG have adopted a phased approach to improving the availability of equality information. Information on service usage at individual patient level is most accessible from computerised systems. Initially the EISG will concentrate on accessing and improving the quality and coverage of age, gender and postcode data and on PAS and systems to which PAS is linked. EISG’s view is that further consideration must be given as to whether the categories of marital status, religion, racial group, disability, dependants and social class could or should be enhanced or included on systems. Data holders will be asked their views on making such information available centrally where collected. The final phase would consider means of collecting data on political opinion and sexual orientation. EISG feel that data for these categories are likely to be too sensitive to be systems based. The following actions aim to implement this approach.

Action Points	Roles/Detailed Tasks	Target Dates	Actors
<p><b>1 Improving access and availability of system data that is already collected and is of good quality and coverage.</b></p> <p><b>Developing new regional datasets and analysing their equality/NTSN information content.</b></p>	<p>1.1 Draft letter to Trusts outlining our plans on way ahead covering data quality improvements and accessing additional data from their systems for regional view. Ask for views from Trusts on allowing central access to equality information such as religion. Seek agreement from Trusts to providing access to equality/NTSN data that is currently collected and to other equality/NTSN variables that might be collected in the future.</p>	January 2003	IAU
	<p>1.2 Develop as part of the data warehouse a regional <b>outpatient activity</b> database (including available equality/NTSN data) by accessing a download from each Trust. Currently patient level outpatient activity data is collected on the Patient Administration System (PAS) but is not provided centrally. The actions required to facilitate regional data are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IAU and DIS to discuss specification of download.</li> </ul>	January 2003	IAU/DIS
	<p>1.3 Develop a Regional <b>Outpatient Waiting List</b> database (including available equality/NTSN data). Outpatient Waiting List data has been earmarked as the next target for the data warehouse project. The actions required to facilitate regional data are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss in detail with DIS the minimum dataset and timeframe to achieve a central Outpatient Waiting List database,</li> </ul>	March 2003	IAU/DIS

Action Points	Roles/Detailed Tasks	Target Dates	Actors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange for download via Decision Support from each Trust.</li> </ul> <p>1.4 Take forward work to develop available equality/NTSN data on <b>Regional Mental Health Inpatient System</b>. Actions required are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process data extracts received from Trusts and address data quality/compatibility issues.</li> <li>• Analyse data in terms of Equality and NTSN.</li> </ul> <p>1.5 Develop a Regional Accident and Emergency activity database (including available equality/NTSN data) by accessing a download from each Trust. Currently patient level A&amp;E activity data are collected on <b>NIRAES</b> for 8 Trusts (two other Trusts have their own systems) but are not provided centrally. The actions required to facilitate regional data are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss in detail with DIS the minimum dataset and timeframe to achieve a central A&amp;E database,</li> <li>• Investigate feasibility of obtaining similar data from 2 Trusts with local systems,</li> <li>• Arrange for download from each Trust.</li> </ul> <p>1.6 Investigate the feasibility of analysing regional Radiology equality/NTSN information held on <b>NIRADs</b> (including available equality/NTSN data) by accessing a download. The actions required to facilitate regional analysis are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss in detail with DIS the potential usefulness of the data held and minimum dataset and timeframe to achieve access by IAU,</li> <li>• Arrange for download if appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>1.7 Investigate with Department and Boards the possibility of re-starting work to secure regional access to <b>Child Health System</b> data including available Equality/New TSN data.</p>	<p>July 2003</p> <p>September 2003</p> <p>October 2003</p> <p>March 2003</p> <p>March 2003 September 2003</p> <p>March 2003</p> <p>June 2003</p> <p>January 2003</p>	<p>IAU/DIS</p> <p>IAU</p> <p>IAU</p> <p>IAU/DIS</p> <p>IAU/DIS IAU/DIS</p> <p>IAU/DIS</p> <p>IAU/DIS</p> <p>IAU</p>

2 Accessing Existing Quantitative Data on Systems – Other Equality Variables

Beyond age, gender and postcode only a few systems collect additional equality variables. The aim of this section of the workplan is to ascertain what additional variables it might be practicable to collect. It also aims to improve the quality, coverage and accessibility of variables that are collected. Because the nature of the work involved is much more developmental it may transpire that following initial investigation and discussion with data holders, some of the action points will not be practicable.

2 Other system related initiatives including data quality and developing an expanded list of captured and accessible variables.	2.1 Investigate feasibility of adding postcode/geographical identifier to as many systems as possible to enable postcode to be used as a proxy. Actions required are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with DIS list of systems which do not have Postcode,</li> <li>• Identify which if any of these systems it would be practicable to populate with postcode.</li> </ul>	September 2003 September 2003	IAU/DIS IAU/DIS
	2.2 Having taken on board Trust views on the subject (1.1, page 1), if appropriate, arrange access to additional variables that are on the Patient Administration System but not on the Hospital Inpatients System ( <b>religion, racial group and occupation</b> ). Actions required are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with DIS the feasibility of expanding list of equality/NTSN variables held on HIS</li> <li>• DIS to get inpatient PAS data from each Trust containing fields that will allow matching with HIS data with the additional equality variables that are on PAS currently but not on HIS. Casenote Number, ADMIT_DATE, EPS_ORDER, D.O.B., Postcode, Gender and Marital Status which are on both PAS and HIS plus religion, racial group and occupation which are on PAS only</li> <li>• DIS will make this data available to RIB to enhance HIS</li> <li>• Liaise with data holders (including Trusts and Boards) on access to information and manage data permissions</li> <li>• RIB will match this new data with HIS data using common variables and undertake reconciliation exercise with Trusts on new data (Problems may be eased with availability of Health &amp; Care Number (H&amp;C No.)).</li> </ul>	March 2003  April 2003  April 2003 April 2003  May 2003	DIS/IAU  DIS/IAU  DIS IAU/DIS  IAU

	<p>2.3 Benchmark the coverage of expanded list of equality/NTSN variables on <b>HIS</b> for each Trust to ensure best practice is applied by utilising the existing feedback mechanism in place between the Trusts and IAU.</p> <p>2.4 Consider the feasibility of including marital status, religion, occupation and racial group variables on the specification of <b>inpatient waiting list</b> data made available centrally through the data warehouse project. Required actions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DIS to include additional fields on inpatient waiting list extract,</li> <li>• IAU to undertake reconciliation exercise with Trusts on new data.</li> </ul> <p>2.5 Investigate whether the additional information that is available on clinical systems (beyond that which is available on PAS) warrants obtaining extracts from the clinical systems. If so, consider feasibility of including marital status, religion, racial group and occupation on those <b>DSS extracts and clinical systems</b> where they are not currently included.</p> <p>2.6 Undertake work to improve coverage and quality of age, gender, marital status, religion, occupation and racial group data on <b>PAS</b> by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with data holders and with existing liaison groups to address data quality issues of equality/NEW TSN data,</li> <li>• Initiating work to investigate issues inhibiting the collection of racial group data on PAS and initiate work to improve its coverage and quality,</li> <li>• Seek agreement on provisional data dictionary (in line with 2001 Census) for equality variables whilst Equality Commission for Northern Ireland develop a definitive list. Subsequently feed into EC work programme (and revised guidance) so that an agreed and standardised set of descriptors for each equality/NEW TSN category is developed, which can be used on each system.</li> </ul> <p>2.7 Consider the feasibility of creating and maintaining a service user database that includes the classification of each individual under each of the Section 75 groups together with the new Health &amp; Care Number so that future activity data could be referenced to the relevant classifications.</p>	<p>May 2003</p> <p>March 2003 April 2003</p> <p>July 2003</p> <p>July 2003</p> <p>May 2003</p> <p>May 2003</p> <p>March 2003</p>	<p>IAU</p> <p>IAU/DIS IAU/DIS</p> <p>IAU/DIS</p> <p>IAU/DIS</p> <p>IAU</p> <p>IAU</p> <p>IAU/DIS</p>
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	<p>2.8 Develop contacts (initially informally) with chair of PCIS procurement project regarding specification of system.</p>	<p>January 2003</p>	<p>IAU</p>
	<p>2.9 Develop, maintain and publish on the internet/intranet nine guides to the availability of equality information by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making a November 2002 Version available on Internet/Intranet,</li> <li>• Investigating the availability of funding to commission external consultant to add new material to guides,</li> <li>• Making May 2003 Version available on Internet/Intranet.</li> </ul>	<p>January 2003 January 2003 July 2003</p>	<p>IAU IAU IAU</p>

**3. Baseline/Denominator Data:**

An important aspect of equality information is the need for robust data on the distribution of the Section 75 groups in the general population at a regional and local level. The following actions aim to maximise the availability of this information. Again these areas of work are developmental and in some cases dependent on co-operation with other bodies. As such it is difficult to estimate timescales.

<b>3 Develop baseline Database and address remaining data gaps</b>	3.1	Develop baseline information at NI, Board and Trust level for all Equality categories.	September 2003	IAU
	3.2	Make use of data as it becomes available from the 2001 Census: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age and gender breakdown now available – Make available on Equality Information Guides at regional and local level.</li> </ul>	January 2003	IAU
	3.3	Influence future Census plans to include all Equality variables in 2011 Census.	DFP consultation period	IAU
	3.4	Make alternative arrangements to collect baseline data to fill information gaps (the gaps are likely to be in the categories of sexual orientation and political opinion).	September 2003	IAU
	3.5	Make use of available relevant research and link into NI SRA and cross-departmental work programmes.	September 2003	IAU
	3.6	Consider alternative data sources, proxies, research, surveys, information from other sectors of HPSS etc..	September 2003	IAU
	3.7	Develop linkages with groups working in areas where data availability is poor.	September 2003	IAU
	3.8	Continue to work with and take advice from equality groups to determine alternative approaches to filling information gaps.	Ongoing	IAU
	3.9	Commission research studies, survey programme to fit in with Equality Impact Assessment process.	September 2003	IAU
	3.10	Develop information on the particular health needs of different Section 75 Groups.	September 2003	IAU

4. Address remaining data gaps

Gaps in equality information will still remain following system enhancements and available census/research data. The following action points aim to address these gaps.

<b>4 Cross Departmental Developments</b>	4.1	Identify secondary data sources (develop knowledge repository – cross departmental?) – partially completed in consultation for Guides but needs further work due to limited response.	September 2003	IAU/ NI SRA
	4.2	Feed into EC work programme to develop data dictionary i.e. agree a standardised set of descriptors for each equality/NEW TSN category that can be used on every system. This involves liaison with Equality Commission, Equality Groups, Equality Officer Network and NI SRA staff in other Departments.	July 2003	IAU
	4.3	Feed into EC commissioned pilot work to develop pilot projects to assess the feasibility of collecting equality information at the point of service delivery	July 2003	IAU
	4.4	Work with ESNRIG on creation of look-up codes/datasets to derive religion (and deprivation) based on post codes- (Note: The religion work was completed for CCRU, now OFMDFM, but there was some debate as to its usefulness – need to re-assess. The deprivation information is available at small area level from Noble work)	July 2003	IAU
	4.5	Work with ESNRIG to influence cross-departmental information and research strategy and priorities for funding & research	Ongoing	IAU