

Statistics at NHSBSA

Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) – England

National Statistics assessment action plan.

Document Release Note

Document Name: Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) – England, National Statistics assessment action plan.

Document Details Name	Version Number	Description
Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) – England, National Statistics assessment action plan.	v001	An action plan outlining the actions required by NHBSA to retain National Statistics designation for the Prescription Cost Analysis England publication.

Revision Details Revision Number	Revision Date	Revision Description	Page Number	Previous Page Number	Action Taken	Addenda/ New Page

About this document

The NHS Business Services Authority's (NHSBSA) Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) – England Official Statistic release was assessed from April 2020 to October 2020 by the [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) (OSR) to determine if it fully complied with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#), and met the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality, and public value.

OSR identified six requirements for NHSBSA to address in order to ensure the high standards associated with National Statistics designation are met. This action plan outlines how the NHSBSA Official Statistics team proposes to achieve these requirements by February 2021. This will allow OSR to recommend to the UK Statistics Authority that National Statistics status for these statistics is confirmed.

The OSR Assessment report can be found on its [website](#).

Requirement	Proposed actions
<p>1. To enhance the value of PCA, NHSBSA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide an explanation about the similarities and differences between the monthly and annual prescription cost analysis data. • establish clear signposting between the two sources. • include prominent advice about how PCA can and cannot be used. 	<p>a. NHSBSA will improve signposting between the monthly PCA management information (MI) data release and the PCA annual Official Statistic publication, ensuring prominent advice is provided identifying differences and similarities of each product.</p>
	<p>b. NHSBSA will revise content on its website pages, the background information and methodology note that accompanies the PCA Official Statistic release, and the HTML narrative statistical summary to better explanation of the differences between the monthly PCA MI release and the PCA annual Official Statistic publication, including how PCA can and cannot be used.</p>
	<p>c. NHSBSA will revise content on its website pages, clearly establish signposting to comparable statistical products (e.g. devolved administrations) and previous iterations of the publication.</p>
	<p>d. Provide detailed guidance on the criteria and comparability between NHSBSA prescribing and dispensing Official Statistics publications, including</p>

	<p>suitable uses. This will be a prominently placed webpage within the Statistics section of the NHSBSA website.</p>
<p>2. To ensure the level of insight meets the full range of user needs, NHSBSA should collaborate with pharmaceutical experts (within and outside NHSBSA) or statisticians in the devolved administrations in its development of statistical commentary.</p>	<p>a. NHSBSA will proactively engage with the wider Government Statistical Service (GSS) Good Practice Team (GPT), Presentation and Dissemination Network, and fellow PCA Official Statistic producers in the devolved administrations as it continues to develop the statistical commentary for PCA.</p> <p>b. NHSBSA will proactively engage with pharmaceutical experts within and outside its organisation as it continues to develop the statistical commentary for PCA.</p> <p>c. NHSBSA will reflect on user feedback and research on its PCA Official Statistic publication to date, as well gather further user feedback through a public consultation, which it will also use to develop the statistical commentary for PCA.</p>
<p>3. To improve the comparability of PCA across the UK, NHSBSA should work with the devolved nations to ensure that the guidance in making any comparisons is clear and well defined. NHSBSA should also engage with users on making financial</p>	<p>a. NHSBSA will work with fellow PCA Official Statistic producers in the devolved administrations to ensure clear signposting between our releases, with consistent and harmonised guidance on making any comparisons across</p>

<p>year PCA data available.</p>	<p>releases.</p> <p>b. NHSBSA will revise the background information and methodology note that accompanies the PCA Official Statistic release to better describe the comparability of PCA across the UK.</p> <p>c. NHSBSA will ask users through a public consultation on their interest and need for financial year data available in the PCA Official Statistic release output tables.</p>
<p>4. To ensure coherence and comparability across the UK, NHSBSA should consult and incorporate the views of experts working in the other nations of the UK or abroad in the methods review.</p>	<p>a. NHSBSA will seek input from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) methodology advisory service, and peer producers in the devolved administrations on proposed changes to the methodology used in its PCA Official Statistics release.</p>

	<p>b. NHSBSA will publicly consult on proposed changes to the methodology used in its PCA Official Statistics release to allow the public and expert users the opportunity to express their views. NHSBSA will then incorporate these views in its final methodological approach.</p>
<p>5. To further improve the trustworthiness of NHSBSA, the relationship with the Head of Profession for Statistics in DHSC should be reinstated, to ensure the Lead Official is fully supported in their role to produce Official Statistics.</p>	<p>a. NHSBSA will re-establish quarterly recurring meetings between its Lead Official for Statistics (LO) and the Head of Profession for Statistics (HoP) in the Department of Health and Social Care to ensure the Lead Official is fully supported in their role to produce Official Statistics.</p>
<p>6. To improve the public confidence and transparency of NHSBSA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All data access processes should be clearly defined and publicly documented to ensure that all users understand and are fully aware of the new process. • NHSBSA should reflect on the FoI requests received and review whether to include the information in future routine data publications 	<p>a. NHSBSA will revise content on its website pages, in its HTML narrative statistical summary, and its Official Statistics Customer Service and User Engagement policy to more clearly define the access routes and procedures to data other than what is available via publications.</p> <p>b. NHSBSA will reflect on the freedom of information (FoI) and Preliminary Questions (PQs) requests it receives and review whether to include information in future routine data publications.</p>

Contact us

Feedback is important to us; we welcome any questions and comments relating to this document.

Please quote 'Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) – England, National Statistics assessment action plan.' in the subject title of any correspondence.

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