

Guidance on the submission of general and acute Friends and Family Test data



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Summary

1. This guidance sets out the arrangements for the submission of monthly NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) data to NHS England.
2. The data is submitted through the SDCS system.
3. It includes the process of submitting FFT data for:
 - Inpatients (including daycases);
 - Accident and Emergency (including walk-in-centres and minor-injury-units);
 - Maternity; and
 - Outpatients.
4. 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
5. From April 2020, 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.*
6. Providers are allowed flexibility in how they make FFT available to their patients, which can be categorised as:

Inpatients, including daycases

- SMS/text
- Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk before or at point of discharge
- smartphone app/tablet after discharge;
- paper/postcard before or at point of discharge;
- paper/postcard after discharge;
- telephone survey after discharge;
- online survey;
- other

A&E

- SMS/text
- Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk before or at point of discharge
- paper/postcard before or at point of discharge;
- paper/postcard after discharge;
- telephone survey after discharge;
- online survey;
- other

Maternity

Antenatal care	Care at birth	Care on postnatal ward	Postnatal community care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMS/text; • Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk during antenatal care; • Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk post birth • paper/postcard during antenatal care; • paper/postcard post birth; • telephone survey post birth; • online survey; • other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMS/text; • Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk before or at point of discharge from postnatal ward; • Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk at home • paper/postcard before or at point of discharge from postnatal ward; • paper/postcard at home; • telephone survey at home; • online survey; • other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMS/text; • Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk before or at point of discharge from postnatal ward; • Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk at home • paper/postcard before or at point of discharge from postnatal ward; • paper/postcard at home; • telephone survey at home; • online survey; • other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMS/text; • Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk before or at point of discharge from midwifery service; • Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk after discharge from midwifery service • paper/postcard before or at point of discharge from midwifery service; • paper/postcard after discharge from midwifery service; • telephone survey; • online survey; • other.

Outpatients

- SMS/text
- Smartphone app/tablet/kiosk at appointment;
- smartphone app/tablet after appointment;
- paper/postcard at appointment;
- paper/postcard after appointment;
- telephone survey after appointment;
- online survey;
- other

Data to submit

- Organisations are required to submit data to NHS England on a monthly basis.
- For each month, for each area of service, organisations are required to submit:
 - the total number of responses in each response category (*very good, good* and so on);
 - the number of responses collected through each collection method; and
 - the total number of people eligible to respond (for inpatients, A&E and maternity question 2 only).
- Free text comments are not submitted to NHS England.

Timeline

- Organisations can submit their data from the first working day of the month following the data collection. The deadline for submissions is the **ninth working day** (inclusive) of the month, following the data collection period.
- Dates for the whole of 2020/21 are shown in Annex 1

Data submission process Q&A

Where do I submit FFT data?

12. Organisations are required to submit data through the SDCS system. SDCS is an NHS Digital managed data collection system that flows aggregated data from the health service. SDCS is used to submit the existing FFT data¹.

How do I submit FFT data?

13. FFT data must be uploaded to NHS England via SDCS using the Excel spreadsheets (templates) provided.
14. Organisations are required to make separate submissions for each of the services they provide, using the appropriate SDCS template.
15. All templates will be available on SDCS in April 2020.

What will happen after I submit the data?

16. NHS England will undertake basic validation of the data to highlight any anomalies, which will be followed up with respective organisations. This may result in an organisation being required to resubmit the data.
17. 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/.
18. Once the data is published by NHS England there will be no facility available to revise the data. Organisations are therefore advised to take extreme care when submitting their data. If there are data issues, the focus is on providers improving the quality of future submissions.

¹ SDCS can only be accessed by providers and is not available to commercial suppliers of FFT services.

Inpatients and Daycases

Changes to the data submission process

19. The requirements for implementing the FFT in acute inpatient services will change from 1 April 2020.
20. From April 2020 the question response options fields will change and, as the timing requirements for collecting FFT feedback are changing, there are related changes to the collection mode options fields.

When do I submit inpatient and daycase FFT data?

21. Inpatient FFT data should continue to be submitted to NHS England on a monthly basis.

How do I submit inpatient and daycase FFT data?

22. The data should be submitted via SDCS on the template provided.

What breakdown is required for inpatient data?

23. Inpatient FFT data should be broken down and submitted at ward level, with each ward allocated up to two speciality codes. At least one speciality code per ward must be entered for the submission to be accepted (the exception to this is for 'daycases' reported as a dummy ward).
24. Daycase FFT data should be included within the ward count where applicable or presented as a dummy ward labelled 'daycases' where the patient doesn't spend any time on a ward. A dummy ward should be submitted for each site where applicable. Where a dummy ward for 'daycases' is submitted, no specialty will be expected.
25. There is no requirement to separate out the FFT data for children and young people.

Do I need to submit eligible population data for inpatients and how is this affected by the inclusion of daycases?

26. Indicative population data should continue to be submitted to NHS England on a monthly basis.
27. The indicative population for inpatients should include any person discharged home or to another organisation (i.e. such as a community hospital) following admittance as an acute inpatient.
28. The indicative population should also include the number of discharges where the patient was admitted as a daycase.

Accident and Emergency, Walk-in-Centres and Minor- injury-Units

Changes to the data submission process

29. The requirements for implementing the FFT in accident and emergency departments will change from 1 April 2020.
30. From April 2020 the question response options fields will change and, as the timing requirements for collecting FFT feedback are changing, there are related changes to the collection mode options fields.

When do I submit Accident and Emergency, Walk-in-Centre and Minor-injury-Unit FFT data?

31. A&E FFT data should continue to be submitted to NHS England on a monthly basis.
32. FFT data for walk-in-centres, minor-injury-units and for children and young people should be submitted to NHS England on a monthly basis.
33. Community providers should submit FFT data for walk-in-centres and minor-injury- units in their separate community return.

How do I submit A&E, WiC, MIU FFT data?

34. The data should be submitted via SDCS on the template provided.

What breakdown is required for A&E data?

35. A&E data should be broken down and submitted at hospital site level.
36. Walk-in-centres and minor-injury-unit FFT data should be submitted as a combined dummy site labelled "WiC/MIU".
37. There is no requirement to separate out the FFT data for children and young people.

Do I need to submit eligible population data for A&E and how is this affected by the inclusion of walk-in-centres and minor- injury-units?

38. Indicative population data should continue to be submitted to NHS England on a monthly basis.
39. The indicative population for A&E should include any person discharged home or to another organisation (i.e. such as community hospitals) following attendance at A&E.
40. The indicative population should also include the number of WiC and MIU discharges.

Maternity

Changes to the data submission process

41. From April 2020 the question response options fields will change and, as the timing requirements for collecting FFT feedback are changing, there are related changes to the collection mode options fields.

When do I submit maternity FFT data?

42. Maternity FFT data should continue to be submitted to NHS England on a monthly basis.

How do I submit maternity FFT data?

43. The data should be submitted via SDCS on the template provided.

What breakdown is required for maternity data?

44. For question 1 (antenatal care), question 2 (care at birth) and question 3 (care on a postnatal ward), FFT data should be broken down and submitted at hospital site level.
45. For question 4 (postnatal community care), the FFT data should be submitted at trust level only.

Do I need to submit indicative population data for maternity?

46. Indicative population data for question 2 (care at birth) should continue to be submitted to NHS England on a monthly basis. The indicative population for question 2 is the number of live births in the given period.

Outpatients

Data submission process

47. All patients accessing acute outpatient services should have the opportunity to provide feedback on the services they have received via the FFT.
48. The outpatient FFT data will be a separate return.

When do I submit outpatient FFT data?

49. Outpatient FFT data should continue to be submitted to NHS England on a monthly basis.

How do I submit outpatient FFT data?

50. The data should be submitted via SDCS on the template provided.

What breakdown is required for outpatient data?

51. There is no requirement to breakdown the outpatient FFT data. The data should be submitted at trust level only.
52. There is no requirement to separate out the FFT data for children and young people.

Do I need to submit indicative population data for outpatients?

53. There is no requirement to submit indicative population data for outpatients.
54. NHS England will publish the number of outpatient attendances for each organisation alongside the FFT results, to give users of the data a broad indication of the levels of participation in each organisation. There is no target response rate for outpatients, as in the other acute settings.
55. Outpatient attendance data will be taken from the NHS England Quarterly Activity Return (QAR). Data from the QAR was chosen following discussions with the NHS England data submission and reporting workstream group, with the aim of providing an informative measure whilst trying to minimise the burden on providers submitting the data.
56. NHS England will present a monthly average of the QAR for each organisation submitting FFT outpatient data.

Annex 1: Submission deadlines for 2020/21

1. 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 thirteenth working day (inclusive) of the month, following the data collection period.
2. Dates for the first year are shown in the table below.

FFT feedback month	Submission closure (ninth working day of the month)
April 2020	14 May 2020
May 2020	11 June 2020
June 2020	13 July 2020
July 2020	13 August 2020
August 2020	11 September 2020
September 2020	13 October 2020
October 2020	12 November 2020
November 2020	11 December 2020
December 2020	14 January 2021
January 2021	11 February 2021
February 2021	11 March 2021
March 2021	15 April 2021

Annex 2: Submission Tips

Always download and use the latest submission proforma from SDCS for submitting the current month.

Ensure where applicable:

- Correct Organisation code/name is selected
- Submitter is only submitting for related trusts/sites
- All values are populated for all rows of data as necessary (include zeros for response values rather than leaving blank). DO NOT use dashes or letters
- Only numeric values are used for response breakdown and mode of collection
- Values for mode of collection and total number of responses match, and are not null
- Eligible population or alternative are submitted where required
- Sheet totals match row totals
- Only valid Site Specialty codes from the dropdown list are submitted for Inpatient returns. At least one must be provided for each ward (excluding Daycase wards). DO NOT paste in alternative/modified codes or 'NULL'
- No duplicate wards are submitted (Inpatient)
- No duplicate sites are submitted (A&E, Maternity)

Always 'Sense check' the figures entered. You know what your data should look like, so any unusually large or small values should be checked before submission.

Always check the Control Panel tab of the submission proforma before submitting. Make sure there are no validation issues flagged.

Check and correct all issues to ensure validation flags are removed before submitting.