

Outpatient Appointments Supporting Information

Some outpatient appointments could be eliminated by handling them in other ways. Many patients could be treated effectively and more cheaply outside hospital altogether, and follow-up of some could be conducted over the telephone.

The Department of Health has identified the opportunities for outpatient work to be moved out of the hospital into the community. It has identified six specialties in which most outpatient care could be provided outside of hospital. These are: dermatology, ENT, general surgery, orthopaedics, urology and gynaecology. The DH is currently working with the Royal Colleges to define clinically safe pathways for these specialties to ensure that the right care is provided in the right environment.

Key steps to :

- CCGs should analyse their outpatient referral rates to ensure that they are in line with expected levels.
- CCGs should introduce systems to monitor GP referral rates and provide feedback to them. Practice-based commissioning can be used to incentivise GPs to reduce referral levels where they are overly high.
- Increase the number of GPs with a special interest, so that patients can be referred to them rather than hospital outpatients. In many countries, virtually no outpatient appointments are carried out in hospitals. Providing care outside of the hospital is more cost effective and often more convenient for patients.
- Develop the skills of nurses and allied health professionals, so that they can take on work from GPs, such as providing first contact care and tailored services for patients with long-term illnesses, such as diabetes and chronic lung disease.

Further Information

For detail about the standardisation methods used please visit <http://www.nhselect.nhs.uk/Service-Transformation/Better-Care-Better-Value-Indicators>

Information Shown

This indicator shows the directly standardised rate of first attendance per 100,000 population. A higher rate may suggest poor management of thresholds for referral.

Rank	Information Shown	Productivity Opportunity
1	Nhs england south (south west)	6852.61
2	Nhs england south (south central)	7014.37

3	Nhs england midlands and east (north midlands)	8006.10	22,820,816.66
4	Nhs england south (south east)	8231.68	31,666,354.16
5	Nhs england north (cumbria and north east)	8247.22	22,279,934.73
6	Nhs england midlands and east (central midlands)	8365.49	30,637,091.00
7	Nhs england north (yorkshire and humber)	8447.16	41,133,079.84
8	Nhs england midlands and east (east)	8496.94	27,424,199.10
9	Nhs england north (lancashire)	8651.30	11,091,727.24
10	Wessex Area Team	9028.66	19,916,151.72
10	Nhs england south (wessex)	9028.66	19,916,151.72
11	Nhs england london	9197.19	59,431,888.80
11	London Area Team	9197.19	59,431,888.80
12	Nhs england north (greater manchester)	9422.13	25,353,707.12
13	Nhs england north (cheshire and merseyside)	9425.48	23,353,613.81
14	Nhs england midlands and east (west midlands)	9495.60	35,659,336.77