



Department
of Health

How the NHS in England compares to other countries in publishing selected transparency metrics

Background

Internal analysis by the Department of Health (DH) looked into how the NHS in England compares to 10 other countries in publishing selected transparency metrics. We have chosen to compare England to countries that are featured in publications by the Commonwealth Fund (Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States). This list of 10 metrics was chosen by DH to represent the full range of health service sectors and to draw out measures that reflect overall levels of performance.

The selected transparency metrics were:

- Is a rating for overall quality and safety of care published for each major hospital?
- Is a rating for overall quality of care published for each GP surgery?
- Is rating for overall quality published for each residential care home?
- Is rating for overall quality published for each home care provider?
- Are individual consultant outcomes published? (i.e. patient mortality rates)
- Are individual GP outcomes published? (i.e. at doctor-level)
- Are access times for treatment published for each major hospital?
- Are patient experience measures or metrics published for each major hospital?
- Are patient experience measures or metrics published for each GP surgery?
- Do patients have online access to their medical records?
- Is there a single patient record across the whole system?

We have been assisted by the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies who contacted national experts in each of the comparator countries over 6th – 10th July 2015 to establish whether the selected metrics are published there, and

subsequently reviewed the information. Information on England is based on internal DH analysis.




We have assigned a red rating in circumstances where countries do not publish the selected indicator. We have found that some countries among the 10 Commonwealth Fund comparators *could* publish aggregate quality and safety ratings and/or outcomes for individual healthcare professionals but *choose not to* – given methodological and statistical concerns.



We have taken care to ensure the provided information is as robust as it can be – but it is important to note that terms such as ‘overall rating’ and ‘patient experience’ can have different meanings in respective national contexts. Similarly, we may not know if an indicator is being developed if this is not made public by the relevant national authorities.

Where these indicators are published in England they are not necessarily published as Official Statistics. Similarly, our analysis does not consider whether publications in other countries are published by relevant statistical bodies or compliant with relevant statistical codes of practice.

Table 1. How the NHS in England compares to other countries in publishing selected transparency metrics?

Key:

-  - yes
-  - no, but in development
-  - no and not in development

											
	England	Australia	Canada	France	Germany	Netherlands	New Zealand	Norway	Sweden	Switzerland	United States
Is a rating for overall quality and safety of care published for each major hospital?											
Is a rating for overall quality of care published for each GP surgery?											
Is rating for overall quality published for each residential care home?											
Is rating for overall quality published for each home care provider?											
Are individual consultant outcomes published? (i.e. patient mortality rates)											
Are individual GP outcomes published? (i.e. at doctor-level)											
Are access times for treatment published for each major hospital?											
Are patient experience measures or metrics published for each major hospital?											
Are patient experience measures or metrics published for each GP surgery?											
Do patients have online access to their medical records?											
Is there a single patient record across the whole system?											

Findings (see Table 1)

An overall quality and safety of care rating is published for each major hospital in England¹, inspected under CQC's new inspection regime. None of the comparator countries publish overall quality and safety of care ratings for each major hospital. At a regional-level only, Sweden publishes overall hospital ratings. No other comparator countries publish or plan to publish such an indicator. Some countries (e.g. France or Canada) publish individual quality and safety dimensions for each hospital, which could theoretically be aggregated into an overall rating.

An overall quality of care rating is published for each GP surgery in England², inspected under CQC's new inspection regime. None of the comparator countries publish an overall quality of care rating for each GP surgery, nor at regional or national level, and there are no plans to publish such an indicator. For internal purposes only and without being published, overall quality ratings for GP surgeries exist in France.

An overall quality rating is published for each residential care home³ and each domiciliary care provider⁴ in England, inspected under CQC's new inspection regime. Only Germany publishes an overall rating for every residential care home and domiciliary care provider. None of the other countries has such a rating, nor at regional or national level, and none has plans to introduce one.

In England, individual consultant outcomes (e.g. patient mortality rates) are published for 12 specialities⁵, but outcome measures for individual general practitioner doctors are not available. None of the comparator countries publish outcomes for either consultants or individual general practitioners, and none has plans to publish any such metric. Some of these countries noted concerns with regard to conceptual and methodological grounds (Norway) or ethical reasons (Netherlands). In New Zealand, concern has been raised about small numbers, especially in provincial hospitals, and the lacking possibility of adjusting appropriately for case mix and complexity. For internal purposes only and without being published, both mortality rates by individual hospital specialists and outcome measures for individual GPs exist in France.

Access times for treatment are published for each major hospital in England⁶ as well as in six of the 10 comparator countries (Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United States). At a regional-level only, New Zealand also publishes access times for treatment.

Patient experience metrics are published for each major hospital⁷ and each GP surgery⁸ in England.

- In six of the 10 comparator countries patient experience metrics are published for each hospital (Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States). At a regional-level only, Australia also publishes indicators of

¹ <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/performance/Results?ResultsViewId=1015>

² <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/performance/Results?ResultsViewId=1005>

³ <http://www.cqc.org.uk/search/services/care-homes>

⁴ <http://www.cqc.org.uk/search/services/services-in-your-home>

⁵ <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/consultants/performanceindicators/1018>

⁶ <http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/rtt-waiting-times/>

⁷ http://www.cqc.org.uk/cqc_survey/3; <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/performance/results?SortingMetricId=8175&ResultsViewId=1015&OrgsOnPageInShortListAsPageLoads=&EntityCode=HOS&InShortList=False&DefaultLocationText=Please+enter+a+location+or+postcode&DefaultSearchRadius=25&CurrentSearchType=Full&MetricGroupId=419&LocationName=Please+enter+a+location+or+postcode&LocationId=0&OrganisationNameSearchValue=&PageSize=10>

⁸ <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/performance/results?SortingMetricId=1912&ResultsViewId=1005&OrgsOnPageInShortListAsPageLoads=&EntityCode=GPB&InShortList=False&DefaultLocationText=Please+enter+a+location+or+postcode&DefaultSearchRadius=5&CurrentSearchType=Full&MetricGroupId=452&LocationName=Please+enter+a+location+or+postcode&LocationId=0&OrganisationNameSearchValue=&PageSize=10>

⁸ <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/performance/results?SortingMetricId=1912&ResultsViewId=1005&OrgsOnPageInShortListAsPageLoads=&EntityCode=GPB&InShortList=False&DefaultLocationText=Please+enter+a+location+or+postcode&DefaultSearchRadius=5&CurrentSearchType=Full&MetricGroupId=452&LocationName=Please+enter+a+location+or+postcode&LocationId=0&OrganisationNameSearchValue=&PageSize=10>

patient experience with hospital care. For internal purposes only and without being published, hospital-level patient experience metrics exist in France.

- In only two of the 10 comparator countries (the Netherlands and Sweden) patient experience metrics are published for each GP surgery. In addition, Norway is planning to publish this metric in the future.

In England, patients can already access a summary of their primary care medical records online, and from 2018 patients will be able to access their records across the whole system (including primary and secondary care). In only three of the 10 comparator countries (Australia, Norway and Sweden) do patients have online access to their medical records and there are no plans to allow online patient access in other countries. Among the comparator countries, only in Australia there is a single patient record across the whole health system, but similar data linkage is under development in Norway.