11 July 2012

Dear Colleague,

Re: Forthcoming changes to the core data set items collected by adult drug and alcohol treatment providers through the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System

As required under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, I am writing to you to inform you of the "changes to methods or classifications well in advance of the release of the changed statistics." Changes will come into effect from November 2012 to core data set items collected through the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System.

The changes replace the existing intervention / modality coding with three separate components:

- the setting in which treatment is provided
- the interventions and sub interventions that make up the treatment
- the time spent in treatment per week

By moving away from the current way interventions are recorded (a mixture of setting and intervention type), it will now possible for providers to record the full package of treatment and care being provided to a client.

For the first time, it will be able to reflect the basis on which prescribing treatment has been provided, for example whether it has been for assessment and stabilisation, maintenance, withdrawal or relapse prevention. The intervention types
will be brought into closer alignment with the interventions recommended by NICE and the 2007 Clinical Guidelines, and in addition services will be able to demonstrate the recovery support interventions they are providing during and after structured treatment. Recording both intervention types and recovery support could be useful in helping to reduce re-presentation rates.

The changes reflect the comments made by the field during the public consultation last year, have been discussed by an expert working group and supported by the NDTMS Board, whose membership includes a representative of the Chief Statistician of the Department of Health. Changes cover both drug and alcohol structured treatment and will bring a number of benefits for providers, commissioners and the broader treatment system. They will not affect the headline figures that we use nationally and locally to record access to and the outcomes of treatment.

Further details on the changes that are being made are available on the NTA website at http://www.nta.nhs.uk/core-data-set.aspx. NDTMS teams will be supporting providers in understanding the changes and preparing for it over the summer.

Yours sincerely,

Rosanna O'Connor
Director of Delivery