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# NDTMS SYSTEMS UPDATE #1

Current NDTMS software and processes provide a secure and stable method for over 2,000 drug and alcohol services to submit treatment activity files each month. A number of improvements have been made to DAMS in recent years to make this process easier and to help improve data quality. The NTA has been working with the regional NDTMS teams in recent months to develop a new version of DAMS (Phase III) that will continue these improvements...

## DAMS: WELCOME TO PHASE III

Treatment data files currently submitted via DAMS each month are checked by a series of validation rules, the results of which are presented back to users who can then submit their information or amend and resubmit if necessary. At the end of the month, regional NDTMS teams upload the data into the NDTMS data warehouse.

This process has been largely successful but it is inefficient as DAMS users have not been able to check that their monthly data is consistent with the existing database at the point of submission. Also, where there are changes to key fields (e.g. client initials, DOB, referral date), this may create additional records in the NDTMS data warehouse.

A national audit took place in 2010 with all submitting services to correct the inconsistent data and we are keen to ensure that an audit exercise such as this is not required again.

DAMS Phase III will solve these problems. The new software will check monthly data files against information already held on the database at the point of their initial validation, and any data quality issues will be highlighted to the user straight away.

Users will be able to resolve discrepancies between their new and existing data on screen through a simple set of options, and the changes will be applied directly to the data warehouse without the need to re-submit.

Improvements have also been made to ensure the system can manage peak loads without users experiencing performance problems or time-out issues.

### THE BENEFITS

These changes will bring significant benefits to drug and alcohol services submitting data to the NDTMS, and to the regional teams who support them, including:

- More accurate data-quality information will be provided to treatment services
- More timely access to feedback on data quality will be available
- Quality and reliability of NDTMS data will be improved

The screenshot displays the NDTMS DAMS interface. At the top, it shows the 'Validation Summary Information' table with columns for Records, Valid, Invalid, Load %, DQ %, Agys, Errors, and No Consent. Below this is the 'Current File Data' section, which includes a table of validation errors with columns for Severity, Rule Description, and Error Count. The 'Missing Information' section at the bottom shows a table of data missing from the file, with columns for Type, Description, and Count. On the right side, there is a table of error details with columns for Error Date, Client Reference, Resolve, and Edit. The interface also includes navigation tabs like 'Upload File', 'Month Status View', 'Reports', 'Administration', 'Change Password', and 'Logout Help'.

- On-screen tools will be simple and user-friendly.

The new version of DAMS will be available early in 2011. Your regional NDTMS team will provide information, training and support during and after the roll-out. For more information, including updated user guides, check the NTA website.

### CORE DATA SET 'H'

Earlier this year the NTA website was updated with details of the agreed data-set changes and the plan for implementation in April 2011. The associated technical documentation is now available via the website.

The changes to the adult drug and alcohol data sets are relatively minor compared to previous years and no major changes to the fields or values are planned. Some changes are being made to the young people data set, and you may wish to familiarise yourself with the new fields. The documents also include some updates following feedback from the NHS data dictionary team.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION...

...on DAMS and other NDTMS systems, see [www.nta.nhs.uk/ndtms.aspx](http://www.nta.nhs.uk/ndtms.aspx)

...on the latest documentation for the NDTMS Core Data Set, see [www.nta.nhs.uk/core-data-set](http://www.nta.nhs.uk/core-data-set)