

Filling in the blanks: improving the data that is gathered

In order to improve something, we need to know what is wrong. This is hard to prove when it comes to NHS CHC as so little data is collected. At the moment the only data required is from people who have been successfully awarded NHS CHC. This means we know nothing about all of those who were unsuccessful. We don't know how long they waited for an assessment, why they were unsuccessful, or if they appealed. We know that healthcare professionals have huge demands on their time, but it is essential that accurate information around NHS CHC is recorded so the system can be improved, and problematic areas can be tackled.

Positive progress

- CCGs now deliver more in-depth data. NHS England has employed a team of people to collect and produce data on NHS CHC. The data is more comprehensive than anything produced before, and provides quarterly stats split down by individual CCG but also geographical areas. They ask CCGs to provide information on:
 - the number of patients newly eligible during the quarter – this is a unique count of new patients granted eligibility during the quarter
 - the number of patients eligible at the end of the quarter (snapshot activity)
 - this is a unique count of patients eligible for NHS CHC on the last date of the reporting quarter

Current challenges

- CCGs don't have to report on condition-specific data. It is essential to have this. For example, if data shows that people with advanced Parkinson's are constantly found ineligible, this could be tackled with more training for professionals on the condition.
- CCGs are asked to report from the date a decision is made and not the date the funding starts. This makes it hard to tell how quickly individuals receive the funding package and care is put in place. We know from people applying that this part of the process can take a significant amount of time.
- When the number of people being awarded CHC has decreased, it is not clear if this is because people have passed away, or people previously eligible have been reassessed and their care has been withdrawn.

What needs to happen?

- NHS England must require information about the condition(s) of the person being assessed for NHS CHC.
- CCGs should report how many people have had eligibility for NHS CHC withdrawn when being reassessed.
- NHS England must request and publish CCGs data on:
 - the total number of NHS CHC applications (whether successful or not)
 - the total number of NHS CHC awards
 - the total number of appeals against decisions of ineligibility
 - the total number of ineligibility decisions overturned at local appeal
 - the total number of ineligibility decisions overturned at independent review panel
 - the total number of ineligibility decisions referred to the PHSO