Measurement Plan

Outpatient physical distancing change package

November 2020, version 1.0

Created as part of the Remobilisation access learning system.

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Outpatient physical distancing measurement plan

Physical distancing is required to safely deliver elective outpatient care during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has caused physical capacity to become the main constraint on the ability of NHS boards to safely deliver elective care. Services across Scotland, and the world, have been implementing local innovations to maximise the number of outpatient appointments that can be delivered while safely maintaining physical distancing. Learning from local innovations have been captured and shared through the Remobilisation Access Learning System.

This measurement plan is part of a Quality Improvement change package to help NHS boards use quality improvement to maximise the number of outpatient appointments while physical distancing due to COVID-19. The change package is available at ihub.scot which includes additional resources such as a driver diagram, data collection template and information on change ideas.

Measurement approach

Data measurement helps determine if the changes make to a system are having the impact outlined in the Outpatient physical distancing driver diagram. The measurement plan has three types of measures:

- Process measures related to the primary drivers if the driver diagram and demonstrate if the changes you make are starting to change how your system works,
- Outcome measures related to the aim to demonstrate the impact of your changes, and
- Balancing measures are used to determine if your changes are having an impact elsewhere in your system.

The data collection template in the Outpatient physical distancing change package will help you collect and present data as run charts. More information about run charts and using measurement for improvement can be found in the QI Zone.

Measures

The table below lists the the outpatient physical distancing process, outcome and balancing measures.

Type of measure	Links to	Measure name	Operational definition	Data collection guidance	Expected change
Process	Fewer patients attend acute sites	Number of off-site appointments	Number of appointments carried out via telephone, Near Me or in a community setting.	Data will be collected by project teams on a weekly basis.	Number of off-site appointments should increase to reduce demand on on-site physical space.
Process	Fewer patients attend acute sites and co-ordinated used of on-site physical space	Number of on-site appointments	Number of appointments carried out face to face in clinics.	Data will be collected by project teams on a weekly basis.	Expected changes will vary depending upon change ideas. It should reduce as change ideas are implemented to reduce on-site appointments but increase when implementing change ideas that improve the co-ordination of on-site physical space.

Type of measure	Links to	Measure name	Operational definition	Data collection guidance	Expected change
Process	Co-ordinated used of on-site physical space	Percentage of clinics running	The percentage of planned clinics that actually ran. Numerator: the number clinics that actually ran. Denominator: the total number of clinics that were planned to run.	Data will be collected by project teams on a weekly basis.	Percentage should increase as co-ordination of on-site space becomes more reliable and improves.
Process	Support to meet physical distancing and safety requirements	Number of breaches	Definition of a breach should be defined locally based on the total number of people in a waiting area to maintain physical distancing. A breach is defined as exceeding the maximum number.	Manual log of breaches per week.	Number of breaches should reduce as patients are supported to physically distance.
Outcome	All	New appointments	This measure includes all new appointments where the patient did not, or could not attend. The number of new appointments that were booked to take place that week (measure at the end of the week to ensure accuracy).	Data will be collected by project teams on a weekly basis.	New appointments should increase as changes are implemented.
Outcome	All	Demand	Number of new referrals.	Data will be collected by project teams on a weekly basis.	To referral should remain stable or decline as changes are made.

Type of measure	Links to	Measure name	Operational definition	Data collection guidance	Expected change
Outcome	All	Experienced waits	The median wait time that patients experienced for the appropriate interval (e.g. referral to first outpatient appointment, agreeing treatment to inpatient/day case procedure) in weeks. The median is the middle wait if all patients are arranged by length of wait (if there is an even number of patients then select a wait midway between the two middle patients). It will be important to understand whether you are looking at a single list, or a combination of lists, for this measure. For example, a pathway might operate separate lists for different regions, but measure the wait time for the pathway as a whole.	This information should be gathered as per national requirements for reporting waiting times.	If looking at a single list, matching capacity to demand should lead to reductions in waiting times. If looking at multiple lists as one single list, then the data is much harder to interpret. As the individual lists will be of different lengths, then the measure will respond to how capacity is deployed across these different lists.

Type of measure	Links to	Measure name	Operational definition	Data collection guidance	Expected change
Balance	All	Care experience	Pathway specific and should be defined locally. NHS Education for Scotland's QI Zone has a helpful guide to defining measures. Engagement guide contains examples of how to gather care experience.	Based on local arrangements.	Should improve or remain static as changes occur.
Balance	All	Staff Satisfaction	Identify an appropriate staff satisfaction measure and monitor on a regular basis.	Can be as detailed as a regular survey or as simple as dropping marbles into a jar at the end of a shift.

You will want to monitor the same aspects of staff satisfaction over time, so keep it consistent. You can however change this measure once improvements have been sustained. | Should improve or remain static as changes occur. |

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