

Transmitting eMED3 fit note data to the Department of Work & Pensions

NHS Digital is working with the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) to perform a weekly anonymous extract of fit note usage data for collection, storage, transmission and publication by NHS Digital.

What do you need to do?

As data controllers, you'll need to inform patients that the data collection is taking place. If a patient does *not* consent to secondary use of GP patient identifiable data, it must be coded on the patient's care record.

Opting out

To comply with the Department of Health's patient objection policy, data about patients who have dissented from secondary use of their data will not be included in the extract. Electronic submission of non-identifiable patient data to the DWP will only be sent if the patient has *not* opted out. You can record patients' consent preferences by adding the appropriate clinical term to their records:

Code Description

9Nu0 Dissent from secondary use of GP patient identifiable data

9Nu1 Dissent withdrawn from secondary use of GP patient identifiable data

What data is included in the extract?

The data extracted is completely anonymous to protect patient privacy and consists of:

- How many eMED3 fit notes are issued.
- How many patients are recorded as 'unfit' or 'maybe fit' for work.
- Fit note duration.
- Gender.
- Health condition type aggregated to a high level diagnosis code, for example, paranoid schizophrenia would be classed as a Mental Disorder.
- Location, including CCG areas.
- Whether workplace adaptations were recommended.

What is the data used for?

The purpose of the anonymised data collection is to provide the DWP with information derived from computer generated Med3 forms in order to:

- Undertake research analysis to inform policy relating to employment and sickness absence, including evaluation of the Fit for Work service.
- Identify geographic, CCG and GP practice level differences in sickness absence management to inform policy development and continuous improvement, resulting in people returning to work sooner.
- Enable baseline comparisons for the Fit for Work service.
- Use fit note data to build an understanding of the drivers for benefit claiming.
- Enable CCGs to self-audit their fit notes to inform their own policy and commissioning decisions.