

Assessment of compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics

Statistics on NHSScotland Workforce

*(produced by the Information Services
Division of NHSScotland)*

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About the UK Statistics Authority

The UK Statistics Authority is an independent body operating at arm's length from government as a non-ministerial department, directly accountable to Parliament. It was established on 1 April 2008 by the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*.

The Authority's overall objective is to promote and safeguard the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good. It is also required to promote and safeguard the quality and comprehensiveness of official statistics, and good practice in relation to official statistics.

The Statistics Authority has two main functions:

1. oversight of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) – the executive office of the Authority;
2. independent scrutiny (monitoring and assessment) of all official statistics produced in the UK.

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ASSESSMENT AND DESIGNATION

Under the provisions of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*, the UK Statistics Authority has a statutory function to assess sets of statistics against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, with a view to determining whether it is appropriate for the statistics to be designated, or to retain their designation, as National Statistics.

Designation as National Statistics means that the statistics are deemed to be compliant with the Code of Practice. Whilst the Code is wide-ranging, designation may be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are well explained.

Designation also signifies that, subject to any caveats in this report, the Statistics Authority judges that the statistics are readily accessible, produced according to sound methods and managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Assessment reports will not normally comment further, for example on the validity of the statistics as a social or economic measure; though reports may point to such questions if the Authority believes that further research would be desirable.

Designation as National Statistics will sometimes be granted in cases where some changes still need to be made to meet fully the requirements of the Code, on condition that steps are taken by the producer body, within a stated timeframe, to address the weaknesses. This is to avoid public confusion and does not reduce the obligation to comply with the Code.

Designation is granted on the basis of the information provided to the Statistics Authority, primarily by the organisation that produces the statistics. The information includes a range of factual evidence and also assurances by the producer organisation. The views of users are also sought. Should further information come to light subsequently which changes the Authority's analysis, the Assessment report may be withdrawn and revised as necessary.

Once designated as National Statistics, it is a statutory requirement on the producer organisation to ensure that the set of statistics continues to be produced, managed and disseminated in compliance with the Code of Practice.

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1 Summary of findings

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This is one of a series of reports prepared under the provisions of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*¹. The report covers eight sets of National Statistics produced by the Information Services Division (ISD) of NHSScotland²:

- *NHS Workforce – Agency and bank nurse usage;*
- *NHS Workforce – Doctors in training compliance with the New Deal and European Working Time Directive;*
- *NHS Workforce – Equality and diversity summary;*
- *NHS Workforce – Sickness absence;*
- *NHS Workforce – Staff in post;*
- *NHS Workforce – Vacancies;*
- *NHS Workforce – Staff turnover; and*
- *NHS Workforce – Student nurse intake and attrition rates;*

This assessment also covers the following publications which are not currently designated as National Statistics:

- *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in NHSScotland: Characteristics of the Workforce Supply; and*
- *Workforce Planning for Psychology Services in NHSScotland – Characteristics of the workforce within Psychology Services.*

1.1.2 This report was prepared by the Authority's Assessment team, and approved by the Board of the Statistics Authority on the advice of the Head of Assessment.

1.2 Decision concerning designation as National Statistics

1.2.1 The Statistics Authority confirms that:

- *NHS Workforce - Agency and bank nurse usage, Doctors in training compliance with the New Deal and European Working Time Directive, Equality and diversity summary, Sickness absence, Staff in post, Vacancies, Staff turnover and Student nurse intake and attrition rates* are designated as National Statistics, subject to ISD implementing the enhancements listed in section 1.5 below and reporting them to the Authority by August 2010;

and has determined that:

- *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Workforce Planning for Psychology Services* can be designated as new National Statistics products, subject to ISD implementing the enhancements listed in section 1.5 below and reporting them to the Authority by August 2010.

¹ http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2007/ukpga_20070018_en_1

² These outputs are available at: <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/796.html>

1.3 Summary of strengths and weaknesses

- 1.3.1 The involvement of the main users of workforce statistics in ISD steering groups helps to ensure that users' experiences are considered and that their requirements are met. ISD has made changes to the timing of the publication of workforce statistics in response to users' requests. However, ISD does not publish information about users' experiences of workforce statistics or how it has responded to their needs.
- 1.3.2 ISD publishes a Statistical Publication Notice for each workforce statistics release which includes a summary of the main findings and guidance on interpreting the information. These Notices provide objective and clear commentary for users of the statistics. ISD also publishes information to explain major changes to workforce statistics, such as the introduction of the new NHS pay system, and provides appropriate trend comparisons.
- 1.3.3 ISD makes the data in its workforce releases available in downloadable spreadsheets for re-use and analysis by users. The format and level of detail was informed by users' feedback, but we think that the presentation of some summarised workforce data on ISD's website could be improved.
- 1.3.4 ISD has sought to minimise the burden on data suppliers and improve the timeliness of its workforce data by the introduction of an electronic data transfer system and an online database.

1.4 Detailed recommendations

- 1.4.1 The Assessment team identified some areas where it felt that ISD could strengthen its compliance with the Code. Those which the Assessment team considers essential to enable re-designation as National Statistics are listed in section 1.5 below. Other suggestions, which would improve the statistics and the service provided to users but which are not central to their designation, are listed at annex 1.

1.5 Requirements for designation as National Statistics

Requirement 1	Publish information about users' experiences of workforce statistics, data quality and the format and timing of reports (para 3.3)
Requirement 2	Draw attention to any statistics being released that are used to measure progress towards government targets and provide a description of these targets (para 3.31)
Requirement 3	Include the name and contact details of the responsible statistician or the statistical Head of Profession in all statistical reports (para 3.36)

2 Subject of the assessment

2.1 The workforce statistics included in this assessment are part of ISD's Workforce Information Programme and each release describes a separate aspect of the NHS workforce in Scotland.³ All publications are released annually, except *Doctors in training* statistics which are published every six months:

- *NHS Workforce - Agency and bank nurse usage* – presents statistical information about the total annual hours, average full time equivalent (FTE) and costs of agency and bank nurses and midwives. Bank nurses and midwives are employed on a temporary basis to manage unforeseen staff absences and predicted shortages.
- *NHS Workforce - Doctors in training compliance with the New Deal and European Working Time Directive* statistics monitor the working hours of doctors in training compared with contracted hours.
- *NHS Workforce - Equality and diversity summary* statistics provide information on NHS staff religion, ethnic groups, sexual orientation, transgender status and disability status. Information is based on self-reporting by staff.
- *NHS Workforce - Sickness absence* statistics include absence due to normal sick leave, unpaid sick leave, industrial injuries, accidents involving a third party, and injuries resulting from violent crimes.
- *NHS Workforce - Staff in post* data include all NHS staff groups and reflects the position across all NHS Boards at 30 September each year. The information is presented in various ways, including high-level summary totals, 10-year trends, or separated by staff group, age group, contract type, gender or NHS Board.
- *NHS Workforce - Vacancies* information includes data for nurses, midwives, Allied Health Professions and Consultants at 30 September each year.
- *NHS Workforce - Staff turnover* provides information about the number of staff leaving and joining NHSScotland each year. Statistics are categorised by staff group and NHS Board, including the ratio of joiners to leavers within each Board.
- *NHS Workforce - Student nurse intake and attrition rates* provide information on the numbers of student nurses and midwives who start training each year, as well as the percentage of students who do not complete their diplomas.
- *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in NHSScotland: Characteristics of the Workforce Supply* provides a detailed description of the nature and extent of current CAMHS provision in Scotland.
- *Workforce Planning for Psychology Services in NHSScotland - Characteristics of the workforce within Psychology Services* statistics describe the characteristics of the workforce engaged in delivering

³ <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/796.html>

psychology services at 30 September each year. Data are presented by various levels, including staff group, type of contract and target age.

2.2 Uses of workforce statistics include:

- informing local, regional and national workforce planning and reporting for all NHS staff groups across Scotland, including the development of a national workforce planning model;
- monitoring staff workloads and compliance with the New Deal and European Working Time Directive;
- informing modelling exercises and monitoring attrition rates to help determine future student training requirements;
- providing NHS Boards with information to prepare funding bids for additional staff posts;
- monitoring the use and cost of agency and bank nurses and midwives;
- providing Higher Education Institutions with information on the numbers of students who subsequently become NHS Scotland employees;
- assessing the level and quality of service provided by staff and identifying gaps in service provision;
- informing Scottish Government policies for specific health issues, such as psychological therapies, and providing appropriately-trained staff to implement these policies;
- providing the public with information about the split between numbers of medical staff and numbers of administrative and managerial staff; and
- monitoring progress against the Scottish Government's commitment on providing child and adolescent mental health services.

2.3 *Sickness absence* statistics were used to monitor progress against the Scottish Government's target to reduce sickness absence among NHS Scotland staff to four per cent by the end of March 2009⁴.

2.4 Since September 2007, ISD has captured most NHSScotland workforce information using the Scottish Workforce Information Standard System (SWISS). This system links workforce information from human resources, payroll and other systems for different staff groups. SWISS replaced some previous paper-based collection system and was designed to decrease costs, streamline the data collection method and provide more detailed, timely and accurate information. ISD carries out separate data collections from NHS organisations for information which is not available on SWISS.

⁴ See Principle 8 for further discussion.

3 Assessment findings

Principle 1: Meeting user needs

The production, management and dissemination of official statistics should meet the requirements of informed decision-making by government, public services, business, researchers and the public.

- 3.1 The main groups representing users of NHS workforce statistics are the Workforce Statistics Steering Group and the Workforce Technical Reference Group⁵. The Steering Group directs the work of ISD's workforce information team, ensures that priorities are identified and supported, and maintains links to Scottish Government statisticians. ISD agrees the priorities for its workforce statistics with this Group, and publishes these on the Workforce pages of its website⁶. The Reference Group ensures that ISD collects and publishes high-quality workforce information to support NHS workforce planning. This Group discusses and approves proposed changes to the calculation and presentation of its workforce statistics with NHS staff and Scottish Government officials.
- 3.2 Heads of NHSScotland Psychology Services meet quarterly to discuss, amongst other issues, the Psychology Workforce Project. The CAMHS Workforce Project has a separate steering group which includes NHS and Scottish Government representatives. Both groups provide feedback to ISD about data quality, formatting and users' experiences and requirements. In 2009 ISD staff also held workshops with users of CAMHS statistics to discuss changes to the database.
- 3.3 ISD carries out an annual customer survey to gather stakeholders' views about its services, and publishes the summarised survey results on its website. We were told that users have provided informal positive feedback about NHS workforce statistics, but ISD does not publish or formally collect information about users' experiences, data quality, format or timing of reports of the workforce publications. As part of the designation as National Statistics, ISD should publish information about users' experiences of workforce statistics, data quality and the format and timing of reports⁷ (Requirement 1).
- 3.4 ISD has responded to requests from users to change the timing of workforce publications to suit users' requirements. Examples of such changes include publishing *Agency and bank nurse usage* statistics in June to include the most recent financial year data, and publishing *Doctors in training* information every six months to tie in with doctors' training programmes.
- 3.5 The change from some paper-based data collection to SWISS has allowed ISD to bring the annual publication of workforce statistical releases forward by around six weeks. This change has provided NHS Boards with more time to ensure that their contributions to the Scottish Government's Workforce Projection exercise are completed more accurately.

⁵ <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/5356.html>

⁶ <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/6126.html>

⁷ In relation to Principle 1 Practice 5 of the Code of Practice.

Principle 2: Impartiality and objectivity

Official statistics, and information about statistical processes, should be managed impartially and objectively.

- 3.6 ISD published its Revisions Policy in February 2010. ISD has published information on its website and issued briefing documents to describe how workforce information has changed following the introduction in January 2008 of the new NHS pay system, *Agenda for Change*⁸. In response to stakeholder feedback, ISD produced a table which allowed a like-for-like trend comparison of staff in post⁹. The table only allowed comparisons at aggregated staff group level due to the incomparability of pre and post-*Agenda for Change* trends. ISD has informed the Assessment team that it was well received by users who required the information for workforce planning.
- 3.7 ISD has adjusted trend information to account for changes to Health Board areas. Information about changes which apply to particular statistics is provided on the "welcome" page and footnotes of each table published on ISD's website.
- 3.8 ISD releases all workforce publications on its website free of charge to users. ISD has a policy for charging for requests for additional information but provides most supplementary statistical services, such as responses to individual information requests, free of charge.

⁸ <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/5356.html#afc> *Agenda for Change* replaced the Whitley Council pay structure. It introduced new pay bands and harmonised terms and condition for NHS staff.

⁹ <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/5363.html>

Principle 3: Integrity

At all stages in the production, management and dissemination of official statistics, the public interest should prevail over organisational, political or personal interests.

- 3.9 ISD and the Scottish Government Health Department have an agreement - signed by the Director General for Health and the Chief Executive of NHS National Services Scotland - which states that the final responsibility for the content, format and timing of statistical releases lies with ISD. The roles and responsibilities of those involved in the publication of official statistics are also included in the *Framework for Scottish Official Statistics* which is published by the Scottish Government's Chief Statistician with input from ISD¹⁰.
- 3.10 Although ISD statisticians have regular contact with Scottish Government policy officials, ISD takes steps to minimise the risk of political pressure being exerted in the production of official statistics. These include senior ISD officials signing off every official statistics publication, and regular staff training on their roles and responsibilities.

¹⁰ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/About/scottishframework/frameworkpdf>

Principle 4: Sound methods and assured quality

Statistical methods should be consistent with scientific principles and internationally recognised best practices, and be fully documented. Quality should be monitored and assured taking account of internationally agreed practices.

- 3.11 ISD publishes details of the data sources it uses to compile its workforce statistics. The web tables include definitions, caveats and explanations of how the statistics were calculated.
- 3.12 ISD has published documents to explain the impact of *Agenda for Change* on workforce information and to describe how "old" and "new" information could be compared. ISD recognises that there are concerns about the quality of the data - for example, where NHS Boards consider that the published workforce data do not reflect their own particular data. In April 2009 ISD began a 2-year data quality improvement exercise to rectify these issues.
- 3.13 All of ISD's workforce releases are accompanied by a Statistical Publication Notice which includes detailed findings and interpretation about the statistics¹¹. ISD also publishes supporting metadata information alongside its workforce publications which describe the accuracy, completeness, comparability and accessibility of the source data¹².
- 3.14 ISD develops publication plans for each of its National Statistics releases to allow sufficient time for its statisticians to check the statistics in accordance with ISD's standard operating procedures – including data checking protocols – before they are published. These plans specify which staff are responsible for checking different sections of the publication. The SWISS project team has developed data quality reports to help suppliers in NHS Boards to quality assure the data. The team also sends high-level summary reports to each NHS Board every six months to allow Boards to preview and amend SWISS data before ISD publishes the statistical releases. The *CAMHS* and *Psychology* project teams engage with lead clinicians, steering group members, and NHS and Scottish Government staff to check the data before publication.
- 3.15 ISD supplies workforce statistics for inclusion in others' publications. These include reports by Eurostat, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the Office for National Statistics. ISD workforce data are used to provide comparisons with corresponding data within the UK – for example, the UK Midwifery 2020 programme¹³.

¹¹ Statistical Publication Notice for the Workforce Statistics released in December 2009:

<http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/6084.html>

¹² <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/6127.html>

¹³ <http://www.midwifery2020.org>

Principle 5: Confidentiality

Private information about individual persons (including bodies corporate) compiled in the production of official statistics is confidential, and should be used for statistical purposes only.

- 3.16 All ISD staff sign confidentiality agreements at induction and annually thereafter, confirming that they have read the corporate Confidentiality Guidelines. These Guidelines were updated in 2009 and cover access to IT equipment and data, incident reporting, data security, release of data and the disposal of confidential data. To gain access to confidential datasets, staff complete an "Access to Data" form countersigned by senior officials. Access is only allowed for specified purposes and must be renewed every six months if access is still required.
- 3.17 ISD has published its Statistical Disclosure Control Protocol on its website. For each workforce publication, information request and response to a Parliamentary Question, ISD carries out a disclosure control risk assessment in line with this Protocol.
- 3.18 ISD's website also contains information about how it protects the confidentiality of its data. This includes details of protecting patients' privacy, secondary uses of health information, and research using personal data.
- 3.19 ISD releases workforce data in accordance with its Disclosure Control protocol, and does not include small numbers for potentially disclosive information.

Principle 6: Proportionate burden

The cost burden on data suppliers should not be excessive and should be assessed relative to the benefits arising from the use of the statistics.

- 3.20 The introduction of SWISS has improved the efficiency and reduced the costs of data capture. Any additional workforce information captured by SWISS is subject to approval by the SWISS Project Board which comprises representatives from NHS Boards. The ISD Workforce Statistics Steering Group and Workforce Technical Reference Group also advise on what additional information is required from SWISS to help support national, regional and local workforce planning. The ISD groups and the SWISS Project Board discuss and evaluate the potential benefit – and associated costs – of any additional information before deciding whether it should be captured.
- 3.21 ISD carries out separate data collections for information which is not included in SWISS. In 2004 ISD introduced an online system which allows suppliers in NHS organisations to enter data directly into the respective ISD databases. This has reduced the burden on suppliers and provided more timely information. Suppliers who cannot access the databases may submit the required information on paper or in spreadsheets.
- 3.22 Feedback to the Assessment team from suppliers of ISD workforce statistics suggest that they are broadly positive about ISD's communication with them, but some suppliers wanted improved guidance on data inputting. Some suppliers suggested that they would like more time to implement changes to inputting and would prefer to provide data at more convenient times.. In contrast to other suppliers, some suppliers of Psychology workforce data considered that they were asked to submit data to ISD which they would not otherwise routinely collect.

Principle 7: Resources

The resources made available for statistical activities should be sufficient to meet the requirements of this Code and should be used efficiently and effectively.

- 3.23 ISD's business planning arrangements do not allow resources for statistical activities to be identified separately from other areas. Planning, budgeting and monitoring instead reflect ISD's matrix management structure. ISD's programme and group business plans do not currently include numbers of staff but we have been told that ISD plans to include staff numbers against each business plan objective for 2010/11.
- 3.24 Due to an ISD staff vacancy, there was no CAMHS release in 2007 and 2008. The data for these years were released in 2009.
- 3.25 There are 17 full-time equivalent staff assigned to the ISD workforce programme. ISD informed the Assessment team that it has sufficient resources to collect, analyse and publish workforce information to the required standard.
- 3.26 ISD uses the standard competency framework used by all non-clinical NHS staff across the UK to document and manage the knowledge and skills of its employees. This framework is used to assess staff performance and to identify training and development needs. ISD has developed a staff learning and development programme, and a range of training courses, online learning opportunities and other resources are available to staff. It also told us that it has well-established and robust procedures for recruiting staff.

Principle 8: Frankness and accessibility

Official statistics, accompanied by full and frank commentary, should be readily accessible to all users.

- 3.27 In 2007 ISD published a briefing document to inform users about changes in the publication of workforce statistics following the introduction of *Agenda for Change*¹⁴.
- 3.28 Over the years ISD has increased the number of published tables to improve users' access to workforce information. In response to users' feedback, the information was condensed into fewer tables with drop-down menus and other adjustments to the layout. These interactive spreadsheets provide users with more flexibility when accessing and comparing workforce information.
- 3.29 The ISD workforce team designed the presentation and format of its web pages and publications in conjunction with the Workforce Technical Reference Group. The Statistical Publication Notices which accompany the release of ISD workforce statistics provide objective commentary to aid interpretation of the data. However, there are instances where additional commentary could help to explain the statistics - for example, the *Vacancies* release only includes a limited number of staff groups. We suggest ISD review the commentary which accompanies its workforce statistics and, where appropriate, strengthen it to aid interpretation.
- 3.30 For some workforce statistics, ISD uses pie charts to present summarised workforce information on its website. Some of these pie charts use at least 10 fractions – although ISD's internal guidelines recommend a maximum of six – which may hinder the interpretability of the statistics¹⁵. We suggest ISD review the way that summarised workforce data are presented to improve the interpretability of the statistics.
- 3.31 The Scottish Government set NHSScotland a target to reduce sickness absence among its staff to four per cent by the end of March 2009. The most recent release of ISD's *Sickness absence* statistics (published in June 2009) was used to monitor progress against this target but ISD did not include any mention of this target in the release. As part of the designation as National Statistics, ISD should draw attention to any statistics being released that are used to measure progress towards government targets and provide a description of these targets¹⁶ (Requirement 2).
- 3.32 ISD publicises its statistical releases in a number of ways. When ISD publishes a release, it sends a Statistical Publication Notice to the media on the day that the release is published. It also publicises its official statistics through news releases, email updates to users and topic-specific newsletters. The ISD website has links to all ISD publications and forthcoming releases. It can be accessed directly from other websites, such as that of the Scottish Government. However, the layout of the ISD website could be improved to be more accessible to users. We understand that ISD plans to develop a new, easy-to-use website by the end of 2010.

¹⁴ <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/5356.html>

¹⁵ <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/6088.html>

¹⁶ In relation to Principle 8 Practice 2 of the Code of Practice.

Protocol 1: User engagement

Effective user engagement is fundamental both to trust in statistics and securing maximum public value. This Protocol draws together the relevant practices set out elsewhere in the Code and expands on the requirements in relation to consultation.

3.33 The requirements for this Protocol are covered elsewhere in this report.

Protocol 2: Release practices

Statistical reports should be released into the public domain in an orderly manner that promotes public confidence and gives equal access to all, subject to relevant legislation.

- 3.34 ISD's approach to pre-release access to its statistics complies with *The Pre-release Access to Official Statistics (Scotland) Order 2008*¹⁷ and is set out in ISD's Publication Protocol¹⁸. The Statistical Publication Notice for each of the workforce outputs contains details of people granted pre-release access to the statistics. The Assessment team welcomes this initiative but considers that it would be helpful to include the estimated number of people who are granted pre-release access.
- 3.35 Scottish Government statements which are issued alongside ISD releases usually refer to ISD as the source of the statistics and provide a link to the statistics publication. ISD alerts government officials in cases where this has not occurred. Whilst the Assessment team has no evidence that this has not occurred recently, we suggest ISD agree with the Scottish Government to seek its agreement that all relevant Government statements refer to ISD as the source of the statistics and provide a link to the statistical publication.
- 3.36 The names and contact details of the responsible statisticians were included in the Statistical Publication Notice which accompanied the workforce statistics release in December 2009. However, these details are not included in individual statistical outputs - for example, for example, the web page which provides commentary on *Sickness Absence* statistics¹⁹. As part of the designation as National Statistics, ISD should include the name and contact details of the responsible statistician or the statistical Head of Profession in all statistical reports²⁰ (Requirement 3).
- 3.37 In response to user feedback, ISD publishes the dates of its annual collection, early release for quality assurance purposes, pre-release and publication of its workforce statistics²¹. ISD's website includes a list of all statistical publications planned for release over the next 12 months. ISD releases are also included in the Scottish Government's list of forthcoming publications.
- 3.38 All of ISD's workforce outputs are accessible from the National Statistics Publication Hub.

¹⁷ http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2008/pdf/ssi_20080399_en.pdf

¹⁸ http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/servlet/FileBuffer?namedFile=Protocol_ISDOnline.pdf

¹⁹ <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/5380.html>

²⁰ In relation to Protocol 2 Practice 6 of the Code of Practice.

²¹ <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/6129.html>

Protocol 3: The use of administrative sources for statistical purposes

Administrative sources should be fully exploited for statistical purposes, subject to adherence to appropriate safeguards.

- 3.39 ISD's Statement of Administrative Sources, published in February 2010, sets out the current administrative systems from which ISD sources its data. ISD carries out internal checks and other quality assurance procedures to verify the quality of administrative data. ISD works with its regular contacts in all NHSScotland Health Boards to address user needs and to revise national data definitions and standards.
- 3.40 ISD operates Standard Operating Procedures for granting its statisticians access to administrative data. All staff with access to data sign a Confidentiality Statement every year.

Annex 1: Suggestions for improvement

A1.1 This annex includes some suggestions for improvement to ISD, in the interest of the public good. These are not formally required for designation, but the Assessment team considers that their implementation will improve public confidence in the production, management and dissemination of official statistics.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Suggestion 1 | Review the commentary which accompanies workforce statistics and, where appropriate, strengthen it to aid interpretation (para 3.29) |
| Suggestion 2 | Review the way that summarised workforce data are presented to improve the interpretability of the statistics (para 3.30) |
| Suggestion 3 | Agree with the Scottish Government that all relevant Government statements refer to ISD as the source of the statistics and provide a link to the statistical publication (para 3.35) |

Annex 2: Summary of assessment process and users' views

A2.1 This assessment was conducted from January to March 2010.

A2.2 The Assessment team – Phil Grigor and Kim Reimann – agreed the scope of and timetable for this assessment with representatives of ISD in January 2010. The Written Evidence for Assessment was provided on 29 January 2010. The Assessment team subsequently met with ISD during February 2010 to review compliance with the Code of Practice, taking account of the written evidence provided and other relevant sources of evidence.

Summary of users and suppliers contacted, and issues raised

A2.3 Part of the assessment process involves our consideration of the views of users. We approach some known and potential users of the set of statistics, and we invite comments via an open note on the Authority's website. This process is not a statistical survey, but it enables us to gain some insights about the extent to which the statistics meet users' needs and the extent to which users feel that the producers of those statistics engage with them. We are aware that responses from users may not be representative of wider views, and we take account of this in the way that we prepare assessment reports.

A2.4 The Assessment team received 11 responses from the user consultation. The respondents were grouped as follows:

NHS	6
Scottish Government	3
Academic	1
Other	1

A2.5 Users informed the Assessment team that their needs are generally met and that they have a positive working relationship with ISD. The ISD workforce team is seen as being helpful in responding to users' queries and providing additional analyses. Users considered the workforce statistics to be generally of high quality but indicated that they would find it helpful to have more timely information and detailed data than are provided at present.

A2.6 Suppliers of ISD workforce statistics informed the Assessment team that there was scope for ISD to engage with them more and that guidance on data inputting methods could be improved.

Key documents/links provided

Written Evidence for Assessment document

NHS Scotland Workforce Information: <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/5356.html>

NHS Workforce - Agency and bank nurse usage: www.isdscotland.org/isd/5685.html

NHS Workforce - Doctors in training compliance with the European Working Time Directive: www.isdscotland.org/isd/5897.html

NHS Workforce - Equality and diversity summary: www.isdscotland.org/isd/5380.html

NHS Workforce - Sickness absence: www.isdscotland.org/isd/5380.html

NHS Workforce - Staff in post: www.isdscotland.org/isd/5247.html

NHS Workforce - Vacancies: www.isdscotland.org/workforce

NHS Workforce - Staff turnover: www.isdscotland.org/isd/5247.html

NHS Workforce - Student nurse intake and attrition rates:
www.isdscotland.org/isd/5352.html#students

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in NHSScotland:
Characteristics of the Workforce Supply: <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/6088.html>

Workforce Planning for Psychology Services in NHSScotland - Characteristics of the
workforce within Psychology Services: <http://www.isdscotland.org/isd/6090.html>

List of assessment reports published to date²²

1. Statistics from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System
National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse
2. Recorded Crime in Scotland
Scottish Government
3. Statistics on Enrolments at Schools and in Funded Pre-School Education in Northern Ireland
Department of Education, Northern Ireland
4. Road Casualty Statistics
Department for Transport
5. UK Energy Sector Indicators
Department of Energy and Climate Change
6. Statistics on Road Freight
Department for Transport
7. Prison Population Projections
Ministry of Justice
8. Migration Statistics
Office for National Statistics
9. Statistics on International Development and the ODA:GNI Ratio
Department for International Development
10. The Scottish Health Survey
Scottish Government
11. Scottish House Condition Survey
Scottish Government
12. Scottish Crime and Justice Survey
Scottish Government
13. Statistics on Children Looked After by Local Authorities in England
Department for Children, Schools and Families
14. Statistics on Children Looked After by Local Authorities in Scotland
Scottish Government
15. Statistics on Children Looked After by Local Authorities in Wales
Welsh Assembly Government
16. Statistics on Children Looked After by Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland
17. Wealth in Great Britain
Office for National Statistics
18. Statistics on the National Child Measurement Programme
NHS Information Centre
19. Average Weekly Earnings
Office for National Statistics
20. Energy Statistics
Department of Energy and Climate Change
21. 18 Weeks Referral to Treatment Statistics
Department of Health
22. Agriculture in the UK and selected crop and livestock statistics
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

²² Published reports are available at: <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html>

23. Child Benefit Statistics
Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
24. Producer Price Indices
Office for National Statistics
25. Services Producer Price Indices
Office for National Statistics
26. Scottish Household Survey outputs
Scottish Government
27. Scottish Labour Market Statistics
Scottish Government
28. Special Assessment of the 2011 Censuses in the UK: Phase 1
Office for National Statistics, the General Register Office for Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
29. Labour Market Statistics for Northern Ireland
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Northern Ireland
30. Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics
Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
31. Emissions Statistics
Department of Energy and Climate Change
32. Council Tax Levels set by Local Authorities
Department for Communities and Local Government
33. Welsh Labour Market Statistics
Welsh Assembly Government
34. UK Labour Market Statistics
Office for National Statistics
35. Statistics on Freedom of Information
Ministry of Justice
36. Statistics on Court Activity
Ministry of Justice
37. Statistics on Cancer in Scotland
NHSScotland
38. Statistics on Cancer Screening in Scotland
NHSScotland
39. Statistics on NHSScotland Workforce
NHSScotland
40. Statistics on Road Conditions in England
Department for Transport
41. Statistics on School and Pupil Characteristics, and Absence and Exclusions, in England
Department for Children, Schools and Families

