



ISD Customer Survey 2010

Summary report on findings

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1 Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises the findings of the 2010 customer survey of Information Services Division of NHS National Services Scotland (ISD). The report focuses on the parts of the survey that sought users' views of the statistics published by ISD.
- 1.2 ISD's customer surveys are used by ISD to evaluate performance and to help identify any areas where there is scope for improvement. It is hoped that this summary report will be of interest to users and stakeholders of ISD.
- 1.3 The customer survey was significantly redesigned this year to provide greater depth and detail on the use of ISD's official statistics output. This was to provide a greater understanding of who the users of ISD data are, what they use the data for and what they think of the range of official statistics health and care topics. This is in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics produced and monitored by the UK Statistics Authority.
- 1.4 It should be noted that, although ISD are pleased with the number and range of user responses, the survey was not designed to be fully representative of all users of ISD.
- 1.5 Key points include:
 - . 586 responses were received, of which 453 said that they had used ISD statistics within the last year and 381 said that they used official statistics publications
 - . almost 9 out of 10 respondents said that, overall, they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with ISD statistics
 - . responses on a range of other indicators – including topic coverage, presentation, impartiality, and background information and interpretation – were largely positive, with typically between 7 to 9 out of 10 users saying 'very good' or 'good'
 - . although views on access to, and timeliness and frequency of, statistics were also mostly positive, these were areas which appear to have most scope for improvement
 - . around 9 out of 10 respondents gave positive feedback on the customer service of ISD staff
 - . the survey results provide a wealth of other information on uses and users of ISD statistics

2 About the respondents

This section provides references to detailed tables which will be published later.

2.1 There were 586 responses to the 2010 survey, an increase of 46% from the 2009 survey despite being a significantly larger and more detailed questionnaire. *(Table 1a)*

2.2 Due to the design and the content of the survey, the numbers of responses received varied between questions. As such, the figures shown in section 2 of this report will be based on differing numbers of responses. Key denominators used are:

- . 453 respondents reported having used ISD statistics within the last year
- . 381 respondents stating that they used official statistics publications (i.e. ISD website)

(Table 4a and Table 5a)

2.3 Of the 453 respondents who had used ISD statistics in the last year:

- . 47% worked for NHS Scotland (excluding NSS); 10% were Scottish Government; 9% were local government; 7% were academia; and 5% were charity / voluntary sector. Responses were also received from professional bodies, members of the public, the media, the NHS outwith Scotland, pharmaceutical companies, and others. *(Table 5a)*

- . 24% classed themselves as 'Clinician' or 'Other Health Professional'; 23% as 'Information/Financial Analyst'; 13% as 'Policy or Performance Manager'; 12% as 'Researcher'; and 10% as Director/Senior Manager. Responses were also received from journalists and communications specialists, administration and clerical staff, and others. *(Table 5b)*

The numbers of NHS Scotland responses varied by NHS Board but did not show a strong link to relative size of Board. *(Table 2a)*

3 Main findings

Please note that the number of responses differed between survey questions, so figures shown below will be based on varying denominators. This section provides references to detailed tables which will be published later.

3.1 Utility of published statistics

- . 89% of respondents said that, overall, they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with ISD statistics; 3% said they were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'. Similar scores were observed for most types of user. (Table 6a)
- . This high rate of satisfaction was generally replicated across all organisations and occupations, although there were small numbers in some categories, e.g. media, that made generalisation difficult.
- . Around 85%-91% of users said that ISD's published statistics were 'very good' or 'good' for breadth of coverage of topics, consistency of presentation and impartiality. (Table 7a)
- . Scores for 'very good' or 'good' of between 67%-77% were observed for coherent interpretation across topics, information on policies/procedures, information about developments/changes, and accessing data for re-use. (Table 7a)
- . The frequency of use of statistics varied by topic, with between 22%-45% of respondents saying that they used statistics at least once per month. (Table 11a)
- . In terms of the statistics 'topics' that were specified in the survey, the number of respondents ranged from 155 (or 42% of all respondents) for Public Health to 78 (21%) for Dental & Ophthalmics. (Table 11a)
- . Users reported using statistics for an average of six different topics. (Table 8a)
- . ISD statistics were most commonly used for the purposes of service planning/monitoring (57% of respondents), quality improvement (45%), research (44%), performance management (42%) and benchmarking (38%). However use varied markedly depending on the type of organisation of the respondent. (Table 10a)

3.2 Users' views on statistics 'topics'

A number of survey questions asked for feedback for the level of statistics 'topics', for example 'Cancer', 'Workforce', etc.

- . The topic with the highest proportion of 'very good' or 'good' responses for **overall needs of users** was Cancer (88%) and the topic with the lowest being Resources & Costs (63%). One half of all 18 topics had 78% or more of responses being 'very good' or 'good'. (Table 12a)¹
- . For **presentation of data**, responses of 'very good' or 'good' ranged from 86% (Child Health users) to 64% (Resources & Costs). One half of all topics had 75% or more of responses as 'very good' or 'good'. (Table 13a)
- . In terms of **background information and interpretation**, one half of all topics had 73% or more of responses as 'very good' or 'good', with Cancer Screening having the highest figure (85%) and Waiting Times and Resources & Costs the lowest (65%). (Table 14a)
- . Regarding **timeliness** of statistics, 'very good' or 'good' responses ranged from 71% (Public

Health) to 52% (Mental Health). One half of all topics showed 67% or more of responses as being 'very good' or 'good'. (Table 15a)

- . The topic with the highest level of 'very good' or 'good' responses for **frequency** of statistics was Cancer Screening (72%) and the topic with the lowest was Prescribing (51%). One half of all topics had 63% or more of responses being 'very good' or 'good'. (Table 16a)
- . For the above questions, there was generally a relatively small proportion of respondents who considered ISD to be 'poor' or 'very poor' – for each question one half of topics received around 3%-4% of views which were 'poor' or 'very poor'. The exception to this was timeliness of statistics – 8 out of 18 topics had 10% of their responses which were 'poor' or 'very poor'. (Table 12a, Table 13a, Table 14a, Table 15a and Table 16a))

3.3 Access to statistics

- . The most common method of access was via the ISD website (84% of respondents). Users most commonly using this method of access included the Scottish Government and the media. (Table 5a)
- . 45% of respondents reported making requests for bespoke analysis. This method of access was most commonly used by the Scottish Government and the media. (Table 5a)
- . 26% of respondents accessed data via ISD systems/databases, 23% used management reports produced by ISD and 13% accessed data as a result of undertaking research. (Table 5a)
- . Customers reported a number of ways of finding out about latest ISD statistics. The most common methods were: checking the ISD website (45%); Scottish Government news releases (34%); ISD Customer Newsletter (33%); ISD publication timetable (26%). However methods of access varied considerably by type of organisation of respondent. (Table 8a)
- . Only 2% of respondents reported using the UK Hub to access ISD statistics. SCOTSTAT was reported by 11% of respondents but was more prevalent among non-Government and non-NHS users, e.g. users in local government, charities, media and public. (Table 8a)

3.4 Customer service

- . Of those respondents who had contacted ISD, 88% said that staff were responsive to their needs, with 12% saying that staff weren't, or weren't always, responsive. (Figure 17a)
- . In terms of 'professionalism', 'efficiency', 'helpfulness' and 'reliability', the percentages of respondents rating ISD as 'very good' or 'good' were between 87% and 95%. For all four indicators, 5% or less of respondents rated ISD as 'poor' or 'very poor'. There were higher levels of positive responses for 'professionalism' and 'helpfulness' than for 'efficiency' and 'reliability'. (Table 18a)

3.5 Other findings

- . Of those who used ISD official statistics publications, 20% were supportive of the ISD practice of 'bunching' publications into monthly release dates, while 3% were negative (the majority of respondents either did not comment or gave no indication of being for or against the practice). (Table 9a)
- . The survey also gathered users' views on the ISD Media Monitoring Service and on the monthly ISD Customer Newsletter. Responses are shown in Tables 19a – 27a but findings are not included in this summary report.

4 Survey methodology

- 4.1 The survey was undertaken electronically online, via Survey Monkey. The survey took was launched on 22 November and with an initial deadline of 13 December 2010. The deadline was extended for a short period due to bad weather.
- 4.2 Known users of ISD services were the target audience for the survey. A link to the survey was emailed to around 2300 known users of ISD compiled from a variety of internal mailing lists and user groups, including for example recipients of the monthly ISD Customer Newsletter, and those registered for media monitoring alerts and Scotstat 'Health & Care' alerts. The survey was also highlighted on the home page of the ISD website – it was hoped that this might help attract the more casual website user. Individual teams within ISD were encouraged to promote the survey with their specific users as a vehicle for feedback on a topic by topic basis.
- 4.3 It was not considered possible to produce survey results which would necessarily be precisely representative of views of all users of ISD statistics. This is because of the wide range of ISD users and also the difficulty in identifying all those who make use of ISD. For example, a considerable proportion of users will access data direct from the ISD website, without being identifiable to ISD. We did not, therefore, attempt to gather a representative sample of users, nor have we attempted to weight the responses in this summary report. However we have attempted to stratify the responses both by the organisation and occupation of the user where this was relevant to provide insight into the differing needs and views of the wide user base. Despite these restrictions, and due to the relatively large number and wide range of respondents, we believe that the results provide a reliable indication of user views.
- 4.4 The content of the survey was altered from previous years. There was a specific focus on users' experiences of the following:
- . using ISD statistics, particularly official statistics publications
 - . the ISD Media Monitoring Service
 - . the ISD Customer Newsletter
 - . customer service

The questions relating to official statistics publications were devised to help meet with certain requirements of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, i.e. to publish information on users' experiences.

The survey did not ask specific questions about the structure or design of the ISD website. This is because ISD received numerous comments on the new ISD website in previous surveys and these have contributed to the design of the new ISD website, to be launched in spring 2011.

5 How ISD will use the results

- 5.1 ISD would like to thank all the respondents who took the time to complete the customer survey and provide this valuable feedback.
- 5.2 ISD will analyse the results further with a view to identifying areas where we can improve our services. In doing so, ISD will also take into account feedback from other sources, for example from a range of steering groups. Improvements, where required, will be undertaken at an organisational level and also at 'topic' level.
- 5.3 The results from the survey will also be offered for use in strategic developments involving ISD, for example the Information & Intelligence Strategy for Health & Care, ongoing identification of ISD priority work areas and improvement of work practices, and the ISD User Engagement Strategy.
- 5.4 Respondents were also given the opportunity to comment on any aspect of ISDs statistics and service using open free text questions. Often the comments received related to specific topics or products and it is not possible to summarise these in a summary report such as this. However these comments have been passed on to the teams responsible for the relevant topic area within ISD for further analysis.
- 5.5 It is expected that publication of this information on users' experiences will help meet relevant requirements of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Notes

¹ This sentence was revised on 4th May 2011. Previously this sentence erroneously reported Resources and Costs as having the highest percentage and Dental and Ophthalmics having the lowest.