

Publication Summary



Support Needs System (SNS) Summary Statistics

as at August 2011

Publication Date- 27 March 2012

About this Release

Support Needs System (SNS) summary statistics are published annually. This release is based on August 2011 data and presents information for ten NHS Board areas. Data for Fife and Dumfries & Galloway NHS Boards have been excluded from this publication due to very small, unrepresentative numbers.

Key Points

- The Support Needs System (SNS) has now been implemented in twelve of Scotland's NHS Boards, although the level of implementation and utilisation of the system varies across Boards. This means figures from SNS must be read with caution. Overall, in the ten participating Boards with data included in these statistics, 15,541 children and young people had assessment data recorded on SNS.
- 78.0% of all children and young people on SNS had at least one impairment (of any severity) recorded and 26.8% of all children and young people on SNS had at least one severe impairment recorded.
- Of all children and young people on SNS, 98.6% were recorded as requiring at least one service (newly identified or ongoing). The most commonly required service type recorded was the involvement of a professional, such as a speech therapist (98.6% of all children on SNS).

Background

The Support Needs System (SNS) is an electronic system that records information about children and young people under 20 years of age with additional support needs. Its aim is to enable early identification, assessment and monitoring of children with additional support needs. The system has now been implemented in twelve of Scotland's NHS Boards, although the level of implementation and utilisation of the system varies across Boards.

A child might be identified as having additional support needs if they require support over and above that usually given to all children. This might be in the form of therapy, a piece of

equipment or other resource and should be required for at least six months. The clinical judgement of the professional is paramount in determining whether a child has support needs. A child will be registered on the SNS if the clinical professional involved with their care (usually a Community Paediatrician) considers it appropriate and following discussion with his / her parent(s) or guardian(s).

The system provides a facility whereby the child's needs and problems can accurately be defined and recorded, and reviewed on a regular basis. It can also record the support or services a child requires and is receiving or using, details of health care professional/s involved and any other pertinent information relating to a child's care. Although primarily a highly valued clinical support tool, information outputs from SNS enable clinicians and managers to identify patterns of need to allow planning of various support services, and to facilitate retrieval of information for research and audit purposes.

A minimum of around two percent of the child population would be expected to be eligible for registration on SNS. In some NHS Boards the proportion of children registered on SNS exceeds two percent and in others a lower proportion of children are registered. This is a reflection of differing implementation and utilisation of the system in each participating Board. In some NHS Board areas, children with more complicated or severe problems are targeted for assessment in SNS, while in other areas children with a wider range of problems are being assessed on the system. ***For these reasons SNS figures cannot be used as direct indications of the prevalence of particular conditions in the wider population and should not be used to make comparisons between NHS Boards.***

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the [Full Publication Report](#) or on the [ISD website](#)

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