Introduction

Users and stakeholders of national prescribing data held by the Information Services Division (ISD) were invited to submit their views on proposed changes to two ISD Prescribing publications; the ‘Prescribing & Medicines: Dispensing Reimbursement, Remuneration and Volume Report’ and the ‘Prescribing & Medicines: Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) report’ and the intention to merge them into a single publication report that is expected to be more useful and convenient for users.

The consultation was open from 27th June 2017 until 25th July 2017, with the new publication released on the 29th of August 2017.

The consultation document was published on the ISD website at:

http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Prescribing-and-Medicines/

ISD would like to thank everyone who took time to provide feedback. This report summarises the responses to this consultation.

Participation

An email inviting key stakeholders to participate was issued to contacts including:

- Scottish Government
- NHS Boards – Directors of Pharmacy and Directors of Finance
- Practitioner and Counter Fraud Services
- Prescribing Information System for Scotland National User Group

The consultation was also promoted through the NHS National Services Scotland Twitter account (@NHSNSS): https://twitter.com/NHSNSS/status/880348354382888960.

Responses received

ISD received both formal responses on the supplied document and verbal responses in meetings with customers. This includes two members of Community Pharmacy Scotland, five members of the Scottish Government and twelve National User Group attendees at the most recent user group meeting. This reflects the most recent meetings with these groups where the consultation was discussed, but these groups were also engaged with prior to the formal consultation.
Results

In the consultation document ISD asked a series of questions regarding the proposed prescribing publication changes.

Q1: Does the merging of these publications present any particular benefits or problems for you and/or your organisation?

All customers who discussed this with ISD regarded this as a positive move that would not cause them problems.

Q2: Would you prefer the proposed inclusion of the Prescription Cost Analysis content under the Remuneration publication’s “Gross Ingredient Cost” to be done in a different way? Tell us your ideas.

One respondent suggested the “Gross Ingredient Cost” data could be visualised in a dashboard, otherwise the proposed way of merging the prescription cost analysis content into the Remuneration report’s Gross Ingredient Cost section was regarded as sensible and there were no conflicting suggestions.

Q3: Will the discontinuation of monthly level analysis from the ‘Financial Year Schedules’ supplementary data tables affect you and / or your organisation? If so please give us details.

All customers indicated this would not affect them. Regular monthly releases of Open Data for prescribing data are likely to be more useful than a monthly breakdown in an annual publication.

Q4: Please tell us about any specific information you would like to see included or excluded from the content of the merging publications.

One respondent requested we provide a breakdown of the items dispensed under different categories (Category M etc.) and a breakdown of the costs of those categories.

In addition to the above, several customers noted that a single release of new statistics would be useful (particularly in managing responding to queries), that rationalising between the different classes of costs in the report was useful, and the new expanded introduction and commentary was clear and helpful.

Conclusions

ISD have considered all the responses received to the consultation and our conclusions are that the merging of publications is a useful and sensible for stakeholders and public users and the effort made to use plain English in commentary, particularly around complex aspects of contactor remuneration, makes the publication more useful and easy to understand. We intend to pursue the request noted under Q4 for inclusion in the 2018 publication.
Contact

If you have any comments about the consultation or ISD’s plans for prescribing data reporting please contact the Prescribing Team at nss.isdPrescribing@nhs.net.