**Message from the Patient Survey**

**Co-ordination Centre about the Inpatient Survey 2015**

This is the second bulletin about the Inpatient Survey 2015. The bulletin details some of the changes that are planned for the survey when it next runs later in 2015. You may recall the last bulletin about the 2015 survey sent by the Co-ordination Centre that confirmed the change to a standard July sample month. If you need a copy of this bulletin please see: <http://www.nhssurveys.org/surveys/833>

The following changes are being introduced for the 2015 inpatient survey, and may be implemented for other surveys under the national programme as they are developed or reviewed, though this is yet to be confirmed. The changes have been outlined in the application for support under section 251 and hence will be confirmed once the outcome of the approval is received.

* + Fixed sampling month to the survey for July. This would allow an earlier start to sampling and sample checking, will avoid sampling the period when new doctors’ start, and will help to further standardise survey processes.
	+ Increase to the sample size (see detailed rationale below).

We have started preparations for the 2015 survey much earlier to enable earlier release of survey materials this year. The timetable will also be amended to take into account the July sample month and other changes.

**Increased sample sizes**

For the 2015 inpatients survey the sample size will increase from 850 to a maximum of 1250 per trust (pending section 251 approval). The larger sample size of 1250 has been decided following sampling power calculations carried out by the Co-ordination Centre. The benefits of increasing the sample size are:

* higher reliability in all estimates; and
* a higher likelihood that further analysis of the data can be completed using additional sample variables.

Increases in the basic sample size will mean that some trusts that have to sample back over a longer period, possibly going as far back as January 2015.  **Please note:** Given that there is variation in the size and throughput of all trusts, we expect that most trusts will aim for a sample of 1250, however if this is not practical due to the size of the available patient population, we instead will request that those trusts achieve a sample as close to the maximum of 1250 as possible.

We have produced a poster for the Inpatient 2015 survey that must be displayed in all relevant areas of your trust, to ensure that patients eligible for the survey have an opportunity to opt out of the survey – in accordance with the s251 approval and your Data Protection Act responsibilities. This poster alerts patients, who are attending during the sample period that they may be sent a survey and how they can prevent this from happening if they don’t want to receive one. The poster is available here: <http://www.nhssurveys.org/survey/1537>

Due to the increased sample size some trusts may need to put this poster up for a longer period of time than that for previous inpatient surveys. If you are unsure about your overall sampling period time then please just put the poster up early as a precaution, so if you do end up using data from earlier months all potentially sampled patients will have had reasonable opportunity to opt out.

Please note that you should add Trust contact details to the bottom of the poster after the text “If you do not wish to take part, or have any questions about the survey, please contact:....” We would advise adding a name and contact telephone number but the poster should not be amended in any other way, as this could invalidate the section 251 approval.

It is essential that a log is kept at your trust to record details of any patients who asked to be excluded from the survey, and they then should be removed from your sample when drawn.

**Survey pilots**

The Co-ordination Centre will complete at least two pilots as part of the 2015 survey. The pilots (pending section 251 approval) will be implemented by the Co-ordination Centre with at least four trusts (the same trusts used for both interventions), who will have additional samples above their national survey sample. The pilots cover interventions that we hope will increase response rates for the survey. The two options will be tested via a randomised controlled trial using a full factorial 2x2 study design. We will look to recruit trusts and will provide more details in due course. Please contact the Co-ordination Centre if you would like to hear more and are interested in taking part.

Please don’t hesitate to contact the Co-ordination Centre if you have any questions or need any further information by emailing Acute.Data@PickerEurope.ac.uk or calling 01865 208127, and a member of the team will be happy to help.

Kind regards,

The Patient Survey Co-ordination Centre