

## Choice and Booking Read Codes - FAQs

### **1. Are these read codes going to be used to measure the Choose and Book element of the DES or just the Choice element?**

These read codes relate to the Choice measurement and should be used for both paper and electronic referrals for a first consultant led out patient appointment. The Choose and Book element of the DES is being measured through a separate monthly report generated by the Choose and Book system. Practice choose and book utilisation data will automatically be generated by this report

### **2. Does it matter if I use 9kK or should it always be used with the trailing dots?**

The use of trailing dots in read codes varies across clinical systems. We will detect the use of both 9kK and 9kK... and whether the system uses 4-or 5-byte codes.

The user should record the code somewhere in the clinical history for those patients who have been offered a choice of provider, or with whom you have had a choice discussion. It doesn't necessarily have to be a 'problem' or 'summary' entry.

As far as the data extract is concerned there is no need to link it to the referral - there is no requirement to record the referral information at all, just the choice code.

### **3. What are the patient confidentiality issues of sampling patients utilising these Choice read codes?**

All we are saying at this stage is that the codes might be used to aid extraction, so practices that want to participate in the Survey and have signed up to the DES should make sure they are using them. Until the extraction method is confirmed, this is just regular coding practice that practices should undertake daily. As with the Access survey last year if this methodology is used, the extraction process will require Data Processing Agreements to be in place to permit lawful use of the data between the data controller (practice) and the processor.

### **4. Does the read code need to go on the 'problem line' or do we need to open another 'problem'?**

The user should record the code somewhere in the clinical history for those patients who have been offered a choice of provider or - if the patient has been referred on to a CAS - with whom you have had a choice discussion. It doesn't necessarily have to be a 'problem' or 'summary' entry.

### **5. When is the start date of referral period for the extract of patients to be used in the choice sample?**

The referral period begins on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007. Practices who wish to take part in the DES should ensure that they are using the Choice DES read codes by this time.

### **6. My practice refers patients to an interim primary care service such as a Clinical Assessment Service and we do not offer the patients choice when they are referred. How will we be able to participate in the DES?**

If you have signed up to the DES, if you refer a patient to a second tier assessment service eg. a CAS, then the GP should explain to the patient that if they are subsequently referred for a first out patient appointment that they will be able to choose for a least four providers.

These Read codes are not specific to an “offer” of choice – they can also be used to indicate patients who have been referred to a CAS.

To participate in the DES you should therefore use these Read codes for patients referred to your CAS

**7. We use the codes 9NS0 (choice of treatment) and 9NS2 (choice of provider) already. Can we just not continue using these?**

We will be able to extract referrals against these codes however we are awaiting further advice from Data Standards on the exact use of these read codes. Until this advice is received, we advise using the new read codes for choice referrals if you intend to sign up to the DES.

**8. Our clinical system (eg EMIS, Vision) does not appear to show these codes? What should I do?**

We are not aware of any particular issues with EMIS or Vision and the codes should be available if you have the latest dictionary upgrade. Please seek advice from your clinical system provider’s helpdesk if you are still experiencing problems.

**9. Will you be making changes to the Choose and Book system to allow the read codes to be entered when the booking is made?**

Unfortunately the lead time for changes to the Choose and Book system is too long to allow for changes to be made in time for this year’s DES.

**10. Do the same exceptions apply as last year?**

Yes. The following referrals are excluded from the choice survey

- ◆ Children (under 16s)
- ◆ Two week wait cancer patients
- ◆ Antenatal patients
- ◆ Rapid Access Chest Clinic patients
- ◆ Mental health

Plus any locally agreed exclusions between the PCT and the SHA.

**11. What are the differences between the three read codes?**

These are simply alternative coding systems which can vary between clinical systems.