

WELSH INFORMATION STANDARDS BOARD

DSC Notice:	DSCN 2025 / 08
Date of Issue:	14 th May 2025

Welsh Health Circular/Official Letter: N/A	Subject: NHS Number Status Indicator
Sponsor: N/A	
Implementation Date: 1 st April 2025	

DATA STANDARDS CHANGE NOTICE

A Data Standards Change Notice (DSCN) is an information mandate for a new or revised information standard.

This DSCN was approved by the Welsh Information Standards Board (WISB) at its meeting on 20th March 2025.

WISB Reference: ISRN 2024 / 006

Summary: To retire a value from the data item 'NHS Number Status Indicator' due to a lack of use and to align with NHS Digital (England).

Data sets / returns affected:

- Admitted Patient Care Data Set (APC Ds)
- Outpatient Data Set (OPA Ds)
- Planned Care Referral Data Set (PCR Ds)
- Emergency Department Data Set (EDDS)
- Maternity Indicators Data Set (MI Ds)
- Single Cancer Pathway Core Data Set (SCPC Ds)
- National Cancer Data Set – Core
- National Cancer Data Set – SACT

Please address enquiries about this Data Standards Change Notice to the Data Standards Team in NHS Wales Informatics Service

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The Welsh Information Standards Board is responsible for appraising information standards. Submission documents and WISB Outcomes relating to the approval of this standard can be found at:

<http://howis.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/page.cfm?orgid=742&pid=24632>

DATA STANDARDS CHANGE NOTICE

Introduction

The Digital Health and Care Wales Data Quality team reviewed the use of each value for NHS Number Status Indicator data item. The data demonstrated that no Local Health Boards/Trusts are using the code 'nn' and haven't since October 2019.

NHS England does not have the value 'nn' in their NHS Number Status Indicator data item. It is therefore proposed to retire the value 'nn' as it is no longer used, this will then support alignment with NHS England.

Description of Change

The following changes to the existing data item 'NHS Number Status Indicator' have been identified:

- To retire value 'nn - Number present and traced using Welsh Patient Demographic Service'

Data Dictionary Version

Where applicable, this DSCN reflects changes introduced by DSCN and/or DDCN since the release of version 4.24 of the NHS Wales Data Dictionary.

The changes introduced by such DSCNs will be published in version 4.25 of the NHS Wales Data Dictionary.

Actions Required

Local Health Boards:

- Ensure that local processes and systems have been updated to comply with the standard set out within this DSCN.

Digital Health and Care Wales:

- Ensure that all national systems have been updated to comply with the standard set out within this DSCN.
- Data Acquisition to update their processes to comply with the changes set out within this DSCN.

Appendix A: Table reflecting areas that are impacted as a result of this DSCN

The following table shows where there are changes to the scope and/or definitions of applicable data sets, data items, terms and other associated areas that are linked with the changes documented within this DSCN.

Each data definition type is listed in alphabetical order and is shown in the sequence in which it appears in this DSCN.

Data Definition Type	Name	New/Retired/Changed	Page Number
Data Item	NHS Number Status Indicator	Changed	5

Appendix B: Highlighted changes to be made to the NHS Wales Data Dictionary

Changes to the NHS Wales Data Dictionary are detailed below, with new text being highlighted in **blue** and deletions are shown with a ~~strikethrough~~. The text shaded in **grey** shows existing text copied from the NHS Wales Data Dictionary.

NHS Number Status Indicator

This data item is / was included in the following data sets / collections between the dates shown:

Data Set / Collection	Valid From	Valid To
APC ds99	1 st April 1999	
EAL ds	1 st April 1999	21 st November 2012
OP ds	1 st April 1999	
PCR ds	1 st July 2008	
EDDS	1 st April 2009	
MI ds	1 st April 2016	
SCPC ds	1 st January 2021	
National Cancer Ds - Core		
National Cancer Ds - SACT		

The status indicator provides information about the potential accuracy and reliability of the NHS number and hence the use to which the number can be put. The indicator can also be used to indicate the general standard of patient data quality within Trusts. This data item became mandatory in Wales in April 1999.

Format: 2 digit numeric

Value	Meaning	Interpretation	Valid From	Valid To
nn	Number present and traced using Welsh Patient Demographic Service	Welsh LHB's should look for high levels of NHS numbers which have an associated status indicator value of 'nn'.	1 st April 1999	1 st April 2025
01	Number present & traced	Providers should be striving to submit numbers that have been traced against an authoritative source (currently the Initial Tracing Service) and so are as reliable and accurate as possible. Therefore Local Health Boards should look for high levels of NHS numbers which have an	1 st April 1999	

		associated status indicator value of "01".		
02	Number present but not traced	This value reveals that although a number is present, it has not been traced against an authoritative source i.e. it has most likely been manually input but not sent to the Initial Tracing Service for checking. An exception to this could be that the NHS number has entered the provider system electronically from a reliable and safe source other than the authoritative tracing service. Users of NHS numbers with a status indicator value of "02" should be cautious.	1 st April 1999	
03	Trace required	The provider should submit patient details for NHS number tracing before DS's are submitted. Therefore the proportion of missing numbers is indicated by the "03" value should be very small.	1 st April 1999	
04	Trace attempted – no match or multiple match found	A significant proportion of "04s" could indicate data quality problems at the provider. However, the LHB should take account of whether the provider has a high level of difficulty to trace patient's e.g. ethnic names, mobile population.	1 st April 1999	
05	Trace needs to be resolved (NHS number or patient detail conflict)	High levels of "05s" imply that the NHS numbers sent by the provider for check tracking are incorrect for the patient. This indicates poor quality of data which could either be due to a poor original source e.g. wrong number given on a GP referral letter, or poor data input by the provider.	1 st April 1999	
06	Trace in progress	This value indicates that the NHS number has been submitted for tracing but a response is awaited. Local Health Boards should expect to see a small proportion of these as the time of DS submission may be before the response from the tracing service is received.	1 st April 1999	
07	Number not present and trace not required	Two circumstances are explained by this indicator:	1 st April 1999	

	1.	NHS number is not required e.g. overseas visitor. This should be easy to identify from other DS data items		
	2.	There is insufficient patient data to enable a successful trace to be made. Local Health Boards need to be more cautious about this reason although they should take into account the type of population the provider serves e.g. itinerants and mental health patients who may not be willing or able to provide sufficient information.		
		Note: Local Health Boards should expect to see a small proportion of cases where there is no NHS number at all.		
08	Trace postponed (baby under six weeks old)	This indicator should only be used for babies under six weeks old and Local Health Boards should check the date of birth details on the DS.	1 st April 1999	