



Capacity Tracker

Insight for Care

24 March 2022

Important DHSC Communication to All Capacity Tracker Users

Dear Capacity Tracker User,

We are, as ever, extremely grateful for the immense work you have done in providing data via the Capacity Tracker over the past two years. This has been one of the main sources of information for central government in directing the management of the pandemic and local councils have also used your information to assist in identifying the support you need.

As you will know, the Capacity Tracker has also been the source of information on vaccination uptake for care home residents and all staff, as well as for Home Care settings and other non-CQC registered providers. As we move into the next financial year, we need to give you some important messages about Capacity Tracker:

1. The Department does need the Capacity Tracker collection to continue into the new financial year given its ongoing role in enabling the effective targeting of support in response to the pandemic, especially now as we transition to living with Covid-19.
2. You may also be aware that the Infection Control and Rapid Testing Fund (ICTF) will conclude on 31 March 2022 (guidance [here](#)). Whilst one of the conditions of access to the fund was timely completion of the Capacity Tracker, we would like to emphasise the importance of your continued submission of data and set out what we are doing to reduce your burden in supplying this key information.
3. In partnership with provider colleagues, the CQC and local government, we have received feedback from the sector on all data items currently in the Capacity Tracker collection. As a result of this feedback, we are removing questions that are no longer required and reducing the reporting frequency on most items. From 4 April, we are removing many questions directly relating to the ICTF (referred to as IPC funding questions in Capacity Tracker) and flu vaccination. We will also be reducing the frequency that you are asked to update the workforce and COVID-19 vaccination questions from daily to weekly. We will also be adding a field for care homes to be able to report the number of residents receiving a second booster where relevant – as was first announced earlier this month for spring 2022 rollout, as [here](#). We would like to particularly stress the continuing importance of the COVID-19 vaccination data that you provide to us at DHSC and more widely to

enable national oversight of the level of vaccination and protection in adult social care settings.

4. In addition to removing these questions, we are also working on a further phase to either remove or improve the remaining questions in Capacity Tracker. This will include improving vital areas such as the questions on workforce and visiting, to make sure they deliver the data that are needed for decision making by DHSC, yourselves as providers, councils, and the wider social care community. We will consult further in this phase to decide which further data items to remove.
5. Care Home vacancy information is used across NHS England and Local Authorities daily to provide vital information on bed capacity nationally. Using the Capacity Tracker to identify vacant capacity remains invaluable for those staff in discharge teams, maintaining daily updates provides confidence the information is accurate and importantly for those waiting for care, saving time and resources to reduce delays for people in hospital awaiting discharge. The Covid-19 vaccination deployment programme use the information entered by providers to track and triangulate resident and staff vaccination rates, particularly with the spring booster roll-out commencing this week along with the continued evergreen offer.
6. We have also received feedback about ways of maximising the value of the Capacity Tracker to you as providers. We are taking this on board and will also be looking to review and refresh the current “provider view” element of Capacity Tracker, which you can use to compare and benchmark your data items against the national, regional and local picture. If you have specific views on how to improve what you see from the analysis pages, please contact DHSC at Capacitytracker-guidance@DHSC.gov.uk.
7. Further on in the year there will be a more significant consideration about the future of central provider data collection and you will be invited to workshops to discuss your data needs.

We look forward to continued work with you over the coming year. We, as ever, remain truly grateful for your work in this past year.

Yours sincerely,

Uma Moorthy

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