



*National Treatment Agency  
for Substance Misuse*

Dear Colleagues,

**Re: Healthcare Commission/NTA joint service review 2006/7 (commissioning & harm reduction) and 2007/8 (diversity & tier 4)**

At the request of EATA, the NTA Standards and Inspection Team are releasing the following briefing for EATA members on the current position in relation to the above reviews.

**2006/7 service review on commissioning and harm reduction:**

The results of this review were released to local drug partnerships (DATs or equivalent structures) in November 2007. The results are not released nationally at this point. They are for the use of local drug partnerships only, as a platform on which to plan improvement, until the publication of the national report. The national report will outline the key findings of the review and is scheduled for publication in April 2008. The full results will also be publicly available at this point on the Healthcare Commission website.

**2007/8 service review on diversity and tier 4:**

The following are the key dates and milestones of the review, with further explanation:

- Local drug partnerships have nominated which Tier 2, 3 and 4 services will submit data on their behalf. This process was completed on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2008. In the case of tier 4, local drug partnerships nominated all inpatient and residential rehabilitation providers commissioned between April 1st and December 31st 2007. They were asked to provide contact details for nominated leads to submit data.
- The assessment framework for the 2007/8 review will be available on the NTA website from the 21st of February 2008.
- In the week beginning Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2008 all service providers nominated to submit data will be emailed to confirm that they have been nominated and are in a position to complete the questionnaire. Later in that week they will be forwarded a user name, password and web-link to the data collection tool for data submission. Tier 4 providers will be required to complete one questionnaire for inpatient-detoxification/stabilisation services and one for residential rehabilitation services they provide. The data submission will then be attributed to all the partnerships who nominated them.
- On Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2008 the data collection period will open. This will run for 4 weeks and close on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2008. Submissions cannot be made beyond this date, unless a specific request for an extension is made and granted. This will only be given in exceptional circumstances. The 'extenuating circumstances' application process should be used, detail on this process will be released at the time of data collection.

- During data submission providers and partnerships are required to compile an 'evidence portfolio'. This should contain documentation that evidences their responses to questions. This portfolio does not need to be submitted unless the partnership or providers are 'spot-checked' following the data submission period. A small sample of providers and partnerships will be spot-checked. The site will be visited and the evidence portfolio reviewed by Healthcare Commission/NTA representatives. Data submissions that cannot be supported will be overturned and scores adjusted accordingly.
- Following data collection the data will be analysed. Following this process 'anonymised results' will be released to partnerships for validation- 'ratification'. Errors in analysis will then be corrected. This is not an opportunity for providers and partnerships to amend their data submission. This process is currently scheduled for September 2008.
- Following 'ratification' the final data set will be published. Local drugs partnership, DAT or equivalent structures, will receive scores for the following:

For diversity a DAT will be assessed on:

- commissioning practice
- local Tier 2 and 3 interventions to diverse populations

For Tier 4 the DAT will be assessed on:

- commissioning of Tier 4 interventions
- the provision of Tier 4 interventions

Individual scores for tier 4 providers will also be available on the Healthcare Commission web-site and released to partnerships. As part of the review all data used to produce partnership scores is published. The NTA/Healthcare Commission will release guidance in relation to how the scores for tier 4 providers should be used. The scores represent a platform on which to improve provision and are indicative of performance only at the time of the review. Therefore consideration should always be given by commissioners to the fact that providers can resolve deficits quickly. We would encourage services to make the actions plans they develop to address low scores available to commissioners, where appropriate. This review methodology has been employed with partnerships and community based services over the last two years.

- The 10-15% worst performing partnerships and providers will be targeted by the 'planned improvement' phase of the review. The review team will provide focused support through this process to providers and partnerships, to develop robust action plans that address aspect of commissioning and delivery that were assessed as underperforming. This phase is currently scheduled for October 2008 to January 2009. Further guidance and information on the detail of this process will be released later in the year. All providers and partnerships are expected to develop action plans to address any low scores (at question and criteria level).

We hope this provides you with some further clarity. Further information will be available on the NTA and Healthcare Commission websites at various stages of the process.

**Standards and Inspection Team**  
[Substance.misuse@nat-nhs.co.uk](mailto:Substance.misuse@nat-nhs.co.uk)