

Estimating patient figures in the most recent years of the annual report

We adjust patient figures in recent years of the report period to account for the lower data completeness levels in these years. This is due to the time associated with legal processes, identifying patient cases and contacting service providers in obtaining clinical information via questionnaires.

Estimates are made according to the number of unreturned questionnaires and the rate of returns based on the accuracy of estimates in previous years.

In Northern Ireland, we present projected figures based on the expected number of unreturned questionnaires only as rate of returns are inconsistent across the previous years.

Some patient sub-groups are more often subject to late notification - for example, in-patient deaths can take up to four years to be registered. In these circumstances we have projected these figures using a more individualised approach, i.e. taking into account the proportion of all deaths in recent years in particular sub-groups. Estimated numbers in the projected years are presented as dotted lines in the figures or in a different shade in the bar diagrams. Changes in figures from previous annual reports occur as further information is received.