

GMS IT – QMAS Revised QOF 2006/07

Guidance for PCTs and practices

This bulletin provides an overview of changes to QMAS which come into effect 1st April 2006 to support the quality and outcomes framework for 2006/07. It is intended for all QMAS users at the NHS Bank, SHAs, PCTs and all GMS and PMS practices participating in the national quality and outcome framework (QOF).

For all QMAS Bulletins and Guidance notes visit: www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/delivery/programmes/qmas/
For QMAS training: www.qmastraining.nhs.uk

Revisions to the GMS Contract for 2006/07 (England)

NHS Employers and the Department of Health (DH) are currently reviewing the GMS Contract 2003. The review is in two stages. Stage 1 was completed in December 2005 and includes improvements to the QOF.

[NHS Employers-The new QOF areas and indicators](#)

The end of year process 2005/06

It is important to note that the end of year process on QMAS for **2005/06** is **not affected** by the changes to the QOF for 2006/07. Practices will still be able to make submissions and complete the approval process to ensure payments are made for the year 2005/06. PCTs will be able to complete their QOF business process and make payments via QMAS as before.

For the latest bulletins on the End of Year Process visit:
www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/delivery/programmes/qmas/

Revisions to QMAS for 2006/07

The Department of Health require that QMAS is upgraded to support the revised indicator set and because of this, from 1st April 2006, QMAS will **not** report on achievement for **2006/07**. Work on this upgrade is underway now and over the coming months further bulletins are planned which will include details of when achievement reporting for 2006/07 will be available again. This is expected to be in the autumn.

You will be advised by bulletin when QMAS has been upgraded with the new and revised QOF indicators. Previously submitted reports from April 2006 will be uploaded for viewing at this time.

For QMAS information and bulletins: www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/delivery/programmes/qmas/

Upgraded Set Aspiration 2006/07

At the end of January 2006 QMAS was upgraded to allow practices to set aspiration for 2006/07 according to the new QOF indicator set.

The majority of practices do not need to aspire i.e. those who participated in QOF during the last financial year (1st April 2005-31st March 2006). Payment for these practices will be based on 60% of their previous year's achievement i.e. the rules governing aspiration payments have not changed. If they do choose to aspire manually using 'Set Aspiration' on QMAS they will only receive a payment equivalent to one-third of the points they aspire to.

The practices that do need to aspire include those who did not participate in QOF in the previous QOF financial year, new practices, split or merged practices and those practices that joined QOF late in the financial year. These practices may find it financially advantageous to aspire using 'Set Aspiration' on QMAS.

For QMAS aspiration training: www.qmastraining.nhs.uk

Change to indicator MH5

Last year the Department of Health agreed with the GPC that the therapeutic range for serum lithium levels in indicator MH5 was to change from 0.6 to 1.0 mmol/l to 0.4 to 1.0 mmol. They also agreed to change the upper achievement threshold from 70% to 90%. These changes were to apply from April 2005.

QMAS was updated to reflect these changes in December 2005.

Frequently Asked Questions

This section outlines the most common questions likely to be asked regarding upgrades to QMAS.

When will the upgraded QMAS software be implemented?

The upgraded software is expected to be available in the autumn of 2006.

What will I be able to see before then?

Existing QMAS functionality will be available i.e. all reports for 2005/2006 will be available to view. The end of year process for 2005/2006 will continue.

Will my 31 March submission be available to view on 2 April 2006?

Yes. You will be able to see your March submission. A reminder bulletin with respect to the End of Year process was published in February.

For the latest QMAS bulletins on the End of Year Process for 2005/06 visit:
www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/delivery/programmes/qmas/

When will the new QOF Read Codes be available?

NHS Employers and the DH are in the process of finalising the QOF Business Rules (which contain the Read Codes) and the guidance to support the new and revised QOF indicators. They will publish these as soon as they are finalised.

Does my clinical system continue to submit my achievement data?

Yes. This will continue to be submitted each month although submissions for financial year 2006/07 will not be shown on QMAS until the upgrade of QMAS is complete.

When will my GP clinical system supplier have their new data extraction ready?

All GP clinical system suppliers will receive the new QOF Indicators and Business Rules once they are approved by the NHS Employers and DH. They will then develop their software and their new QOF data extract will have to go through the NHS CFH testing process. Once this has been passed they will begin rolling out to their users. The GP clinical system suppliers will keep you informed of their plans. In addition, in a future bulletin, a link will be provided to an NHS CFH website where you will be able to check on each supplier's progress.

How will aspirations be set for the financial year 2006/2007?

Practices will again receive an advanced QOF payment. Aspiration setting for the financial year 2006/07 will be based on a practice's previous year's achievement as apposed to an aspiration. For the majority of practices this will be based on 60% of their previous year's achievement.

If a practice has not participated in the QOF in 2005/06 then the practice has to agree its aspirations for 2006/07 with the PCT in order to receive an aspiration payment. The aspiration payment will be based on a manually submitted aspiration. This will be 1/3rd of the agreed aspiration amount. The practice should submit an aspiration using 'Set Aspiration' functionality within QMAS.

What happens to aspiration setting when a practice has changed or only done a few months of this year's QOF?

If the practice has only participated for part of the year, or if the practice's circumstances have significantly changed meaning that a payment based on the previous year's achievement would be inappropriate, the PCT and practice may agree that, to get an appropriate level of aspiration payment, the practice should submit an aspiration using the 'Set Aspiration' functionality within QMAS. This will be 1/3rd of the agreed aspiration amount.

When should my practice make its aspiration?

It is recommended that this decision is made between the practice and the PCT. To ensure that the first monthly aspiration payment can be made from the end of April 2006 it is essential that sufficient time is allowed for the PCT to review and approve the submitted aspiration. Therefore, the earlier this is done the better. Unless the status of the manual aspiration is 'Agreed for Payment' by 31st March 2006, the practice will be paid aspiration for 2006/07 based upon their 2005/06 Achievement.
