

GMS IT – QMAS Revised QOF 2008/09

Guidance for PCTs and practices

This bulletin provides an overview of changes to QMAS which come into effect 1st April 2008 to support the quality and outcomes framework for 2008/09. It is aimed at 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 2008/09 (England)

The Department of Health has released a communication “Proposed Changes to the Quality and Outcomes Framework for the Financial Year 2008/09” (dated 28th March 2008) indicating a number of proposed changes to the QOF Indicator set. This will require an update to QMAS to support these changes.

The end of year process 2007/08

It is important to note that the end of year process on QMAS for 2007/08 is not affected by the changes to the QOF for 2008/09. Practices will still be able to make submissions and complete the approval process to ensure payments are made for the year 2007/08. 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 2008/09

The Department of Health requires that QMAS is upgraded to support the revised indicator set and because of this, from 1st April 2008, QMAS will not report on achievement for 2008/09. 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 2008/09 will be available again.

You will be advised by bulletin when QMAS has been upgraded with the new and revised QOF indicators. Reports from April 2008 will be uploaded automatically for viewing at this time. For QMAS information and bulletins: www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/delivery/programmes/qmas/



Set Aspiration 2008/09

Although there are proposed changes to the QOF Indicator set, the total value of possible Achievement points remains at 1,000 points. Therefore there is no impact to the 'Set Aspiration' functionality.

The majority of practices, i.e. those who participated in QOF during the last financial year (1st April 2007-31st March 2008), do not need to set aspiration manually. Initial aspiration payments for these practices will continue to be based on 60% of their previous year's achievement.

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.

Should the agreed national values for calculating Aspiration be changed by the Department of Health, as detailed in the communication "Proposed Changes to the Quality and Outcomes Framework for the Financial Year 2008/09", an automated adjustment will be made to practices aspiration payments as appropriate.

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

Frequently Asked Questions

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

When will the upgraded QMAS software be implemented?

The upgraded software is expected to be available in the autumn of 2008.

What will I be able to see before then?

Existing QMAS functionality will be available, i.e. all reports for 2007/2008 (or earlier) will be available to view. The end of year process for 2007/2008 will continue.

Will my 31 March submission be available to view on 2 April 2008?

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 2007/08 visit:

www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/delivery/programmes/qmas/

When will the new QOF Read Codes be available?

NHS Employers and the Department of Health 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 2008/09 will not be shown on QMAS until the upgrade of QMAS is complete.



When will my GP clinical system supplier have its 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 the Department of Health. They will then develop their software and their new QOF data extract will have to go through the NHS Connecting for Health (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, a link will be provided to an NHS CFH webpage where you will be able to check on each supplier's progress.

How will aspirations be set for the financial year 2008/2009?

Practices will again receive an advanced QOF payment. Aspiration setting for the financial year 2008/09 will be based on a practice's previous year's achievement as apposed to an aspiration. For the majority of practices this will initially be based on 60% of their previous year's achievement. Following the upgrade to QMAS, an adjustment will be made automatically to practice's aspiration payments.

If a practice has not participated in the QOF in 2007/08 then the practice has to agree its aspirations for 2008/09 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 be made between the practice and the PCT. To ensure that the first monthly aspiration payment can be made from the end of April 2008 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 2008, the practice will be paid aspiration for 2008/09 based upon its 2007/08 achievement.

