Public Health Dashboard

Summary of feedback received and next steps

May 2018

Introduction

The Public Health Dashboard (PHD) was launched in October 2017. Its intention is to support local decision making by bringing existing comparative data into one place and making it accessible to a wide audience, including locally elected politicians. The dashboard currently contains data on services that fall within the local authority mandated functions and public health grant conditions (best start in life, childhood obesity, alcohol and drug treatment, NHS health checks and sexual health services), plus tobacco control.

For each service area there is one overall summary rank indicator and several component indicators. Each local authority in each of the seven areas of delivery has been given a ranking and category description that describes how local delivery compares with all other local authorities, both in England as a whole and also within each local authority’s deprivation decile. The Public Health Dashboard is presented on Public Health England’s “Healthier Lives” platform.

The tool was initially accessible via a password protected website only. The details were sent out to Directors of Public Health asking for feedback related to the suitability and accuracy of the data within the tool, and the general functionality. Some improvements were then made to the Dashbaord before the password protection was removed in mid-October.

Further feedback was sought until the end of November 2017. This document summarises the feedback that was received on the data and tool functionality up until the end of November and proposes developments to the tool ahead of the official launch in July 2018. The priority of the proposed developments is based on the feedback received from users.

Feedback

Up to the 30th November 2017, 65 emails were received into the dedicated inbox set up for the Public Health Dashboard ([phdashboard@phe.gov.uk](mailto:phdashboard@phe.gov.uk)). The vast majority of these emails were from colleagues in local authorities, though some came from within PHE, from NHS organisations and also the Association of Directors of Public Health. In total there were around 375 items of feedback to consider.

The feedback received consisted of questions, comments and suggestions. The table below summarises this feedback by theme.

**Table 1: Summary of emerging themes from feedback received**

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| Theme | Summary of comment | Response to comment / action taken |
| Indicators | Request for additions of whole service areas e.g. mental health, or indicators within current areas e.g. other sexually transmitted infections. | A review of the content will be undertaken based on feedback and inclusion of new service areas or indicators will be based on criteria set out in a separate criteria document (available [here](https://testhealthierlives.phe.org.uk/documents/Criteria%20for%20service%20areas%20and%20indicators_May%202018.docx)). |
| Some comments felt that there is inconsistency between PHD and other PHE products e.g. Public Health Outcomes Framework includes indicators for excess weight in children, whilst the PHD includes indicators on obese children. | PHD is largely consistent with other tools and where it isn’t this will be explained. |
| Comments on the suitability of some indicators that make up the summary rank indicator. | The rationale for indicators is set out in a separate document (available [here](http://healthierlives.phe.org.uk/documents/PHD%20Indicator%20rationale%20paper%2005102017.docx)). As a result of specific feedback on some indicators, the methodology for calculating the summary ranks has been revisited and summary ranks will be revised in July 2018. |
| Lack of clarity within the tool e.g. around the inclusion of service areas or indicators, or definition of certain indicators. | The rationale for indicators is set out in a separate document (available [here](http://healthierlives.phe.org.uk/documents/PHD%20Indicator%20rationale%20paper%2005102017.docx)). The metadata for indicators is set out in separate document (available [here](https://healthierlives.phe.org.uk/documents/Indicator%20summary_16_Oct_2017.xlsx)) |
| Data | Some local authorities were unable to match data in the tool. | Any differences between locally held data and data in the PHD have been resolved.  The indicator metadata has been reviewed to ensure it contains sufficient information to allow users to replicate the calculations. |
| Methodology | Requests were received for information on how the summary rank indicators have been calculated. | The methodology is documented in the methodology document (available [here](https://healthierlives.phe.org.uk/documents/PHD%20Methodology%20for%20combined%20indicators_May%202018.docx)) |
| Comments on the appropriateness of giving equal weight to all component indicators and suggestions that all indicators should be transformed | The methodology is documented in the methodology document (available [here](https://healthierlives.phe.org.uk/documents/PHD%20Methodology%20for%20combined%20indicators_May%202018.docx))  All indicators will be transformed and summary ranks will be updated July 2018. |
| Presentation | Some users queried why the summary rank is split into four categories, while component indicators themselves are split into three. | Methodology is documented in the methodology document (available [here](https://healthierlives.phe.org.uk/documents/PHD%20Methodology%20for%20combined%20indicators_May%202018.docx)). |
| Difficulty in interpreting horizontal bar charts due to scaling and labelling. | Changes have been made to the scaling of the horizontal bar charts to make them easier to interpret. |
| Lack of clarity in presentation around data e.g. why data are missing, the year of data and source of data | Metadata has been improved to ensure that users are able to understand why data are missing.  Value notes have been added to the tool to enable users to quickly understand why data maybe missing.  Time periods for each of the indicators has also been added to the tool. |
| Benchmarking | Request that CIPFA1 nearest neighbour groupings of local authorities be incorporated into tool. | CIPFA nearest neighbour groupings added in May 2018. |
| Accessibility | Problems downloading the data from the tool | Download functionality has been improved to enable user to download data in a .csv file. |
| Navigating around the tool not particularly intuitive | Improvements have been made to make navigating around the tool easier. |
| Metadata relating to component indicators should be made more prominent | Ways to make links to metadata made more prominent within the tool are currently being explored.  Hyperlinks to the metadata are contained within the indicator metadata document on the ‘About the data’ page (available [here](http://healthierlives.phe.org.uk/documents/Indicator%20summary_16_Oct_2017.xlsx)). |
| Polarity | Clarification around whether a high value for indicators and the summary rank indicator is “good” or “bad” | The terminology used to describe indicator categories was revised in May 2018 to make this clearer, using similar terminology in Longer Lives. |
| Webtool functionality | Request for the addition of trend data. | The feasibility of a companion Fingertips profile which contains trend data functionality is being explored. |
| Make it clearer what time period the data relate to. | Time period for all of the indicators within the dashboard has been made more prominent within the tool. |

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