

REAL-TIME DATA MONITORING AND REPORTING OF ASTHMA CARE METRICS

Data can be a powerful tool to identify the need for change and also to demonstrate the impact that an intervention has on practice and patient outcomes. Primary care electronic health records and publicly available prescribing and audit resources can provide valuable insights to help identify patients at risk, monitor prescribing patterns, and illustrate results.

ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD DATA

Primary care electronic health record systems, such as EMIS and SystmOne, which were used by practices in the original SENTINEL quality improvement project, contain a wealth of data and tools to help you improve outcomes for your asthma patients. Data contained within electronic health records can be used in the following ways to help you to meet the aims of SENTINEL Plus:

- Identify people registered with your practice that have asthma and have been prescribed 3 or more SABA inhalers in the past year;
- Identify people registered with your practice that are prescribed only a SABA inhaler, without a concomitant ICS-containing anti-inflammatory inhaler;
- Identify people with asthma registered with your practice that have had a course of oral corticosteroids (or hospitalisation) for their asthma in the past year, indicating loss of asthma control;
- Assess whether your asthma patient has collected their inhalers as you would expect for their prescribed regimen, enabling discussions about adherence and review of the optimal treatment approach;
- Review past asthma reviews to assess change over time and consider any tasks to be picked up during the current review.

Searches can be developed and saved within your electronic health record system so that they can be run at regular intervals. Alerts and prompts can also be developed, for example to alert repeat SABA prescribing, or prompt inhaler technique check, to support you and your colleagues to deliver high quality asthma care.

If you are unsure how to access the data that you need in the electronic health record or to develop and run searches, speak to your practice manager or a senior clinician so they can help you find the support that you need.

PUBLICLY AVAILABLE DATA ABOUT ASTHMA CARE

Openprescribing.net¹

Openprescribing.net is a publicly available resource that is made available by the Bennett Institute for Applied Data Science at the University of Oxford using anonymised prescribing data that is made available each month by NHS England. On the website, you can access prescribing data overtime for the whole of England, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), Sub-ICB locations, Primary Care Networks, and individual GP practices. Openprescribing.net provides a number of 'Area and Prescribing Dashboards', providing key indicators across a range of disease areas, including respiratory.



The Openprescribing.net respiratory dashboard includes a 'Short acting beta agonist inhalers' metric, which responds to changes in prescribing aligned with BTS/NICE/SIGN asthma guidelines.² By measuring the proportion of all inhalers prescribed that are a SABA, compared to all inhaled corticosteroid and SABA inhalers, you will be able to see this value falling as you address SABA over-use and increase prescribing of anti-inflammatory, ICS-containing inhalers. Using this dashboard to see how you compare to other practices and PCN's and monitoring how this measure changes overtime, will help you to see the impact your work is having.

To access the short acting beta agonist inhalers dashboard, select 'Area and Prescribing Dashboards' in the banner at the top of the Openprescribing.net website. From the drop-down list, click on the level of prescribing data you want to see, for example, practice level or PCN level. Type the name of your practice PCN into the search box or select your region from the displayed list. Click on your practice, PCN or region and you will be taken to your prescribing data with standard measures displayed. From here, you will be able to find a hyperlink to 'View all' measures. Following this link will give you the option to select 'Respiratory' from a drop-down list of measures. Look down the list of measures until you find the one you are looking for.*

There are a lot of different ways you can look at prescribing information using Openprescribing.net and you can spend some time navigating the website to discover its full potential.

THE NATIONAL RESPIRATORY AUDIT PROGRAMME (NRAP)³

If you would like more general information about asthma care in your region, particularly for those that have been hospitalised with an asthma exacerbation, you can access dashboards and reports from the NRAP. The reports compile data from people with asthma and COPD that are admitted to hospital in England and Wales. By presenting this data, it allows services and clinicians to identify deficiencies in care. Understanding how services are performing in your region can help provide insights into the care your patients receive when they experience exacerbations, and the importance of joined up care to ensure people with asthma receive care to optimise their treatment and improve control after every exacerbation, whether hospitalised, attending the ED or prescribed oral corticosteroids in primary care. Combining pro-active searches using primary care electronic health records (see above) with reactive reviews after every exacerbation, will help to ensure you identify and address risk in your asthma patients to give them the best outcomes.

HEAD TO THE SENTINEL PLUS WEBSITE TO ACCESS THE FULL TOOLKIT:



*Website instructions correct at time of writing but may be subject to change.

1. OpenPrescribing. <https://openprescribing.net/>. [Accessed: June 2026]
2. Sykes DL, Clarkson MD, Negbenebor A, Cummings H, Faruqi S, Lau O, Ahilal N, Crooks MG. Impact of regional asthma guidelines on SABA prescribing patterns across England: an interrupted time series analysis. Thorax. 2025 Oct 15;80(11):853-857.
3. National Respiratory Audit Programme. <https://www.nrap.org.uk/> [Accessed: June 2026]