

ANNEX A

FAQ on the Socially Excluded Adults PSA and indicators

1. Are there any resources attached to this PSA?

Like all the other PSAs, the socially excluded adults PSA is part of the Comprehensive Spending Review settlement announced in October 2007. PSAs do not have specific funding streams attached to them, since they represent cross-cutting priorities which will be delivered through a wide range of different bodies. So we would expect a large number of different funding streams to contribute to the delivery of this PSA.

2. Will these indicators require local authorities to collect new data?

No. The care leavers and learning disabilities client group indicators are based on the existing returns which local authorities currently provide (the SSDA903 and Information Centres KS1 return respectively). The offender indicators are based on data collected by probation services through the Offender Assessment System (OASys), and the mental health indicators will be collected via data returns made by mental health trusts.

3. How will LSPs obtain data on the offender and mental health indicators?

Data for the indicators on offenders and mental health client groups will be collated by NOMS and the Information Centre¹ respectively, and made available to local areas via a web release. Specific details of provision of data to local authorities will be provided once confirmed with CLG.

4. How are 'settled accommodation' and 'employment' defined?

The full definitions of these and other terms in the indicators are in the indicator templates set out at Annex B.

5. Where does the proxy baseline data in the regional data pack come from?

The exact sources for the proxy data for the mental health and learning disabilities client groups included in the regional data packs are included on the last slide of each of the packs.

6. Why do the indicators for the offender, learning disabilities and mental health client groups focus on employment only (rather than EET)?

The indicators for these client groups measure employment status to reflect the long-term outcome focus of the PSA on ensuring that more excluded groups have a home and a job. Education, training and volunteer activity can play a vital role in the journey toward paid employment, and it is expected these will form an important part of local delivery strategies. However, the indicators have been selected to drive performance toward the key long-term goal of employment. The care leavers indicator also includes education and training to reflect the age range of the indicator (status at 19) and increased likelihood that they will be continuing education and/or training.

7. Why do the offender indicators only cover adults under probation supervision – what about offenders serving short sentences who do not receive probation support on release?

The offender indicators cover both offenders released from prison on licence and those offenders sentenced to community orders. Robust local level data on housing and employment outcomes post-release is only currently available for these client groups. Prisoners serving short sentences are amongst the most vulnerable to experiencing

¹ The Information Centre is an independent NHS special health authority that collects, analyses and distributes statistics on health and social care.

exclusion, and the PSA aims to promote improved housing and employment outcomes for all offender. The Government is currently looking at ways of better supporting this client group and local areas should also factor their needs into delivery plans.

8. Are any mandatory LAA targets being set?

No. In line with the new LAA framework none of the PSA indicators are mandatory. However, local area will be expected to consider the need for setting improvement targets, particularly where performance is poor and / or there are large numbers of any of the client groups. Where areas do choose to set targets, they should make reference to key regional and national benchmarks, and the views of local partners and Government Offices, to ensure that they are suitably ambitious.

9. What level of improvement is expected?

While no mandatory targets are attached to the PSA, it is expected that local authorities and their partners will strive to make positive improvements on the indicators chosen. At the very least, it is expected that such improvements will constitute a significant positive change. Where improvement targets have been set for inclusion in LAAs, it is expected that local authorities will meet these targets.

10. What does 'success' look like on this PSA (local and national)?

At both the national and local level, success in delivering the PSA will be achieved by increasing the proportion of each client group in settled accommodation and employment, education or training. Where improvement targets are set, the actual level of the target will depend on local circumstances and should be based on evidence, the capacity of the agency to deliver, the level of resources available and any other issues that drive performance.

Where improvement targets are not set, local authorities and their partners will continue to report performance on the indicators. Although no mandatory targets will be attached to these indicators, if the indicators show a decline in performance, authorities will be supported through a comprehensive National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy that is a key part of the new, co-ordinated new performance framework.

11. If there are only small numbers of a client group in an area, won't this mean big swings in the data series?

Indicators that are based on small numbers within a client group are more likely to show variation from year to year. Among the client groups for the PSA, this is likely to be the case for the care leaver group in some areas. We advise against setting improvement targets on indicators that have very small client numbers (e.g. less than 30). Rather, targets should be considered for areas where performance is poor and where there are large numbers of the client group in question.

12. Is data available at neighbourhood level?

At present most of the indicator data is only available at upper-tier level (although it is possible to obtain district-level data for the offender indicators). The relatively small size of some of the client groups for the PSA may mean it is not possible to develop robust outcome measures at neighbourhood level. Where poor outcomes or any of the client groups are concentrated in particular areas, LSPs may wish to consider using any proxy measures which are available at sub-authority level.

13. Do I need to include all of the eight indicators?

No, local areas are free to choose between one and all eight of the PSA indicators, depending on the balance of local priorities.

14. Where can I find more information?

Further information on the PSA, and other resources for local authorities and Government Offices, are available on the Social Exclusion Task Force website at: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force

For any further questions on this PSA please contact the SETF at: SETaskForce@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk