



Wakefield APMS Data 2014 – Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the APMS?

The APMS (Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey) assesses the psychiatric morbidity (poor mental health) of adults living in private households in England. It is carried out by NatCen Social research (NatCen) every 7 years in collaboration with the University of Leicester, and is commissioned by NHS Digital. It is funded by the Department of Health. The aim of the survey is to collect data on poor mental health.

Why does Wakefield have its own sample?

Several partner organisations in the Wakefield district provided funding for a larger additional sample to be carried out in Wakefield, in addition to what would have been collected anyway for the national sample. This is sometimes referred to as a 'boost' sample, and in the case of the Wakefield boost consists of 520 participants. This is the first year that Wakefield have paid for an additional boost sample. Funding partners included Wakefield Council, NHS Wakefield CCG and South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

The survey results have been collated and processed by NatCen and then the Public Health team in Wakefield have received them for further analysis.

Who takes part in the APMS?

Adults (aged 16 and over) living in private households in England are invited to take part in the APMS. Letters are sent out to selected households and the household agrees or declines to participate. In the Wakefield sample, this included only households in the Wakefield district.



It is important to note that as the survey covers only those living in private households, those in settings such as large residential care homes, prisons, hostels or those sleeping rough would not have had a chance to be selected. Evidence suggests that people living in such settings are likely to have worse mental health than those living in private households. Because these groups are small, there should be overall minimal impact to the data collected in the APMS.

The sample was determined using sampling methods determined by NatCen which were designed to improve the representativeness of the sample. The sample method incorporated factors such as population/census estimates, percentage of households with a car and people in manual and non-manual occupations. A systematic random sample was drawn and invitations sent out.

What types of things does the APMS ask?

The main purpose of the APMS is to assess mental health disorders. The Wakefield sample focusses more on the Common Mental health Disorders (CMDs) due to the differences in interview techniques. Additionally, the APMS collects data on age, sex, ethnicity, employment and benefit status, debt, treatment use, traumatic life events and people's perceptions around their community.

How is the APMS carried out?

For the Wakefield boost sample, a full face-to-face interview was carried out in addition to a self-completion section. The interview component consists of the CIS-R questionnaire (see below) and most other factors, and then more sensitive information was collected via a self-completion questionnaire completed by the participant using a computer provided by the interviewer.

The England sample had 3 stages which included a clinical assessment for certain psychological conditions. This was not included in the Wakefield sample.

What is the CIS-R?

The CIS-R is the questionnaire that is used to assess the common mental health disorders in the APMS. It stands for 'Clinical Interview Schedule – Revised' as it is an adapted version of a tool used in more rigorous mental health assessments. The questionnaire asks questions around the different symptoms of mental health and computes responses into an overall score. A score of 12 or more indicates that an individual shows symptoms of a CMD that warrant recognition by a GP or primary care provider, and a score of 18 or more indicates severe symptoms warranting intervention by a GP or primary care provider. The CIS-R groups the symptoms into a specific CMD or 'CMD not specified' depending on the types of symptoms that individuals have experienced. It is important to note that individuals may score highly and experience symptoms that are mental health related but not associated with any one specific CMD.



Is the APMS reliable?

The APMS is considered to be one of the most reliable sources of mental health data in England, however the sample for Wakefield is relatively small. This means that data from the APMS should be used in conjunction with other data sources to make sure it is valid. The APMS data is weighted to population estimates, which is designed to further enhance the reliability of the sample. This process was carried out by statisticians at NatCen.

Additionally, survey assessments of mental health are not as reliable as a clinical review. However, the assessments used in the APMS are among the best available for the purposes and have been validated.

Socially undesirable or stigmatised feelings or behaviours may be underreported. Also, some groups are more likely to disclose sensitive information than others (for example in particular ethnic groups).

Where can I find out more about the APMS?

More information about the APMS, the national results, questions asked and other technical details can be found on the NHS Digital website. Visit <https://digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB21748> for more details.

Who do I contact around the Wakefield APMS data?

Please contact the Public Health Intelligence Team based in Wakefield Council with any queries: phi@wakefield.gov.uk