



National Inpatient Experience Survey

Process guide for hospitals
2021

National Inpatient Experience Survey

Process guide

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Author: National Inpatient Experience Survey Team

Approved by: Rachel Flynn, Director, National Care Experience Programme

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National Inpatient Experience Survey contact details

For queries regarding the hospital sub-processes, please contact:

Contact: Elaine McGrath (Health Service Executive)

Email: elaine.mcgrath5@hse.ie

Phone: 087 705 7881

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is the National Inpatient Experience Survey?

The National Inpatient Experience Survey is conducted on an annual¹ basis. The purpose of the survey is to learn from patients' feedback in order to improve hospital care. The National Inpatient Experience Survey falls under the National Care Experience Programme which is a partnership between the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Department of Health.

Please note, due to the global pandemic the process has been changed from previous years.

1.2 How does the Survey work?

Eligible participants will receive a survey pack in the week of 20 October 2021. This is followed by a reminder letter three weeks later and a further survey pack six weeks after the first pack. Participants can complete the survey online or by returning the survey in the post.

The core National Inpatient Experience Survey Team is based in HIQA. You can meet them team at www.yourexperience.ie. HIQA has contracted a market research company, Behaviour and Attitudes (B&A), to manage the collation of eligible participants' contact data and distribution of surveys. HIQA is responsible for managing this service.

1.3 What roles do hospitals play in implementing the Survey?

Hospitals will be responsible for:

- identifying and entering eligible participants in the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset
- quality assuring data in the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset
- uploading the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset to B&A
- opting patients out of the survey in hospital, if requested to do so.

¹ The National Inpatient Experience Survey was not conducted in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.4 What changes have been made to National Inpatient Experience Survey processes for 2021?

The number and frequency of tasks required to be undertaken by hospital staff has been reduced in an effort to accommodate hospital staff as they continue to handle the COVID-19 pandemic. These tasks are:

- upload of one contact dataset for the duration of the National Inpatient Experience Survey, rather than five weekly uploads as in previous years.
- upload of three death check datasets, rather than 10 weekly uploads as in previous years.

2. National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset

The National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset will consist of patients who are eligible to participate in the survey. Each hospital will identify eligible patients through the Patient Administration System (PAS).

2.1 National Inpatient Experience Survey eligibility criteria

Eligible participants must:

- be discharged between 00.01 on 1 September and 23.59 on the 30 September
- be aged 16 years and over (patients born after 1 September 2005 should not be included)
- have stayed 24 hours or more in a public acute hospital
- hold a postal address in the Republic of Ireland.

Table 1 on the next page sets out the criteria for those who **should not** be included in the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset.

Please:

- Double check your dataset to ensure that patients who meet the exclusion criteria are not included in the contact dataset.
- Ensure that the correct extraction codes are included in the contact dataset.

- deceased patients
- persons under the age of 16 years at the time of sampling (patients born after the 1 September 2005 should not be included)
- obstetrics/maternity service users (gynaecology patients are included in this survey)
- psychiatry patients
- outpatients/day-case patients
- patients who stayed in hospital for less than 24 hours
- patients who reside in a prison institution
- patients who do not have a postal address in the Republic of Ireland.

Table 1: National Inpatient Experience Survey exclusion criteria

2.2. What information should the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset contain?

Table 2 sets out the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset

Name	Format
First name	For example, Ciara
Family name	For example, Murphy
Address line 1	Current address
Address line 2	Current address
Address line 3	Current address, if applicable
Address line 4	Current address, if applicable
Address line 5	Current address, if applicable
Eircode	For example, A65 F4E2
Date of birth	dd/mm/yyyy
Sex	Female/Male
Date of admission	dd/mm/yyyy
Source of admission category	Emergency/non-emergency
Date of discharge	dd/mm/yyyy
Discharge destination	a) transfer to other hospital b) home/usual residence c) nursing home d) other
Length of stay	XX days
Hospital group	For example, Dublin Midlands Hospital Group (Please see page 13/14)
Hospital name	For example, Naas General Hospital (Please see page 13/14)
Hospital code	For example, NGH (Please see page 13/14)

Table 2: National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset – data fields and formats

Important: all fields must contain the data items above in the format set out in the above table. Please do not include commas, dashes, exclamation marks, quotation marks, etc.

Please see a template contact dataset on pages 23 to 25.

3. Identification, inclusion and uploading of eligible participants' data

The National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset should be uploaded to your sFTP (secure File Transfer Protocol) as per the schedule below in Table 3. As there will be just one upload of the contact dataset this year, it is essential that your hospital's upload is received on time in order that your hospital is included in the survey.

Date of extraction	Task for hospitals	Deadline for upload of contact dataset
Friday, 1 October 2021	Extract for discharges 1 September and 30 September inclusive	Upload contact dataset by 3pm on Monday, 4 October 2021

Table 3: Schedule for extracting and submitting the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset

3.1 What role do hospitals play?

Step 1: apply eligibility criteria

The designated person within each hospital will identify eligible participants.

To be eligible, patients must:

- be discharged between 00.01 on 1 September and 23.59 on the 30 September
- be aged 16 years and over (patients born after 1 September 2005 should not be included)
- have stayed 24 hours or more in a public acute hospital
- hold a postal address in the Republic of Ireland.

If the eligibility criteria are not adhered to, it will result in a data breach, which will be reported in line with the National Care Experience Programme Data Security Policy. For more information, please see www.yourexperience.ie.

Step 2: create a National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset

Extract and upload eligible participants' details to an Excel or CSV file, as per the fields in the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset outlined in Table 2 (page 9).

Step 3: quality assure the data

Data-quality checks are essential and are outlined in detail in Section 6 of this document. Please see 'Review of data quality' (page 20).

Check all codes to ensure that only the details for eligible patients are extracted.

Step 4: save and title the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset

The National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset must be saved and titled appropriately. This step is crucial to ensure that each of your responses are attributed to your hospital. If the file code is not standardised, then the response will not appear under your hospital.

A National Inpatient Experience Survey code has been assigned to each hospital, which must be used in the filename. Hospital codes can be found in Table 4 (page 13/14).

Files should be titled as follows:

- your assigned hospital code_date of upload to B&A_QA.
For example, Naas General Hospital should have the following filename:
NGH_041021_QA

Ensure you put QA (quality assurance) at the end of your filename. This confirms that your National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset has been quality assured and is ready for download.

Step 5: upload National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset

Upload the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset, using secure File Transfer Protocol (sFTP). The data will be securely stored by B&A for the duration of the National Inpatient Experience Survey cycle.

You can subsequently delete the dataset from the local computer and sFTP tunnel on 30 November 2021.

The HSE will acknowledge receipt of the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset, and follow up where none has been received or if they have identified any quality issues.

3.2 National Inpatient Experience Survey hospital names and codes

Saolta University Health Care Group	
Hospital Name	Hospital code
Galway University Hospitals	GUH
Letterkenny University Hospital	LUH
Mayo University Hospital	MUHM
Portiuncula University Hospital	PUH
Roscommon University Hospital	RCH
Sligo University Hospital	SUH
University of Limerick Hospital Group	
Hospital Name	Hospital code
Croom Orthopaedic Hospital	ULCOH
St John's Hospital	ULSJH
Ennis Hospital	ULHE
Nenagh Hospital	ULHN
University Hospital Limerick	UHL
Ireland East Hospital Group	
Hospital Name	Hospital code
Cappagh National Orthopaedic Hospital	COH
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital	MMUH
Midland Regional Hospital Mullingar	MRHM
Our Lady's Hospital, Navan	OLH
Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital	RVEEH
St Columcille's Hospital	SCH
St Luke's General Hospital	SLGH
St Michael's Hospital	SMH
St Vincent's University Hospital	SVUH
Wexford General Hospital	WGH
Dublin Midlands Hospital Group	
Hospital Name	Hospital Code
Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise	MRHP
Midland Regional Hospital Tullamore	MHRT
Naas General Hospital	NGH
St James's Hospital	SJH
Tallaght University Hospital	THD

RCSI Hospital Group	
Hospital Name	Hospital Code
Beaumont Hospital	BHD
Cavan and Monaghan Hospital	CMH
Connolly Hospital	CHB
Louth County Hospital	LCH
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital	LOL
South / South West Hospital Group	
Hospital Name	Hospital Code
University Hospital Waterford	UHW
Bantry General Hospital	BGH
Cork University Hospital	CUH
Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital	KOH
Mallow General Hospital	MGH
Mercy University Hospital	MUHC
South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital	SIVUH
South Tipperary General Hospital	STGH
University Hospital Kerry	UHK

Table 4: National Inpatient Experience Survey hospital names and codes

3.3. Security arrangements

The National Inpatient Experience Survey complies with data protection laws including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Eligible participants' information will be used for the sole purpose of the survey and will be deleted as soon as the survey is complete. Further details can be found on www.yourexperience.ie.

Each hospital is responsible for ensuring that their National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset is secure, and must adhere to HSE security policies at individual hospital level.

At all times there must be clarity around:

1. what PC the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset is stored on.

2. what security measures are in place to ensure that only the nominated person(s) has access to the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset.
3. The National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset and three death check datasets must be deleted from the designated PC on 30 November 2021 by the nominated person(s).

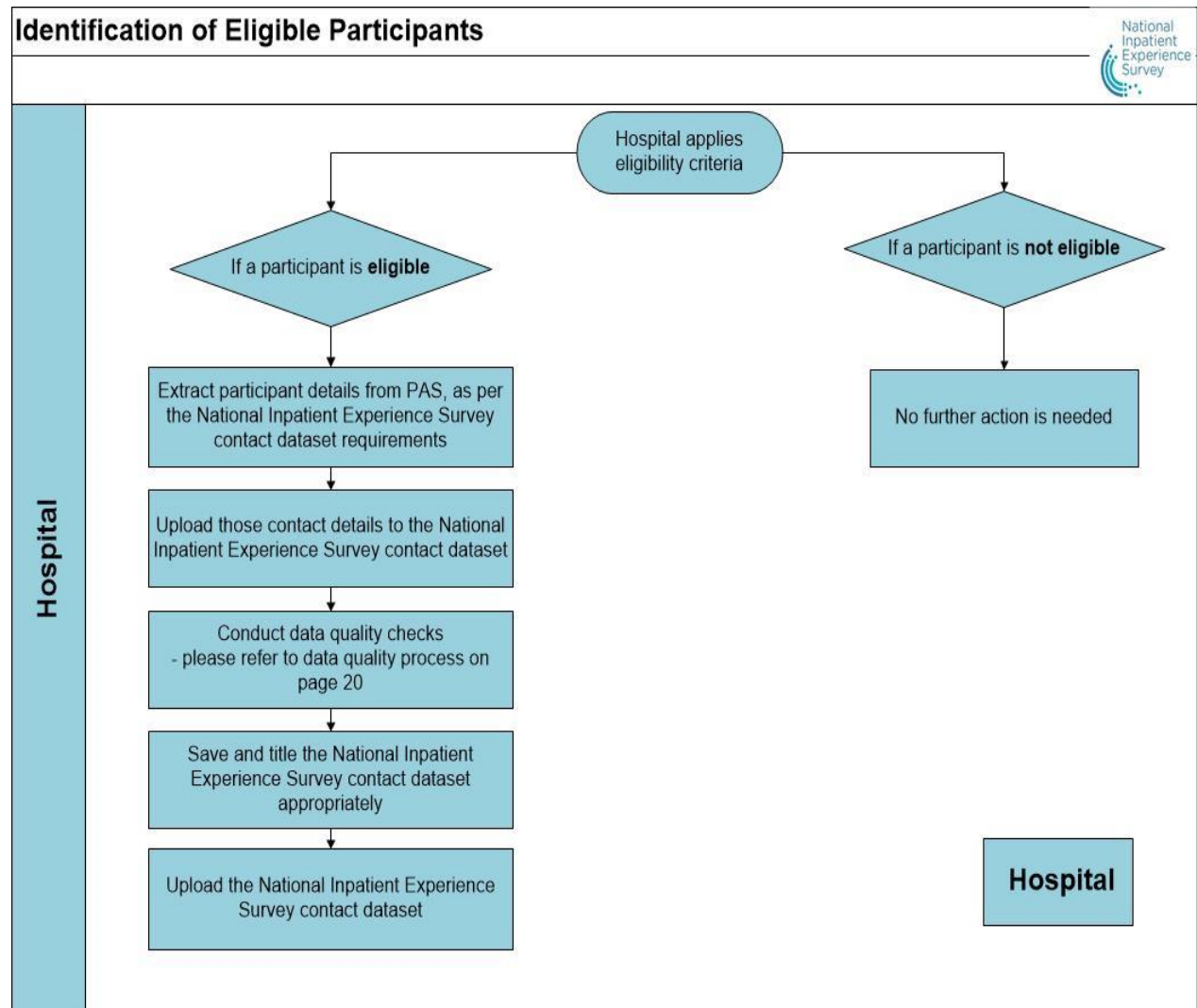


Figure 1: Identification of eligible participants

4. Opt-out process

Participation in the National Inpatient Experience Survey is voluntary. If a participant does not wish to take part in the survey, there are processes in place to facilitate opt-outs.

4.1 What role do hospitals play in the opt-out process?

Upon receipt of their National Inpatient Experience Survey discharge pack, patients can request to opt out. The hospital must take the following steps:

1. The hospital staff member will record the patient's name, address and date of birth on the envelope of their survey discharge pack and send it to the PAS office, via internal post.
2. The PAS office will remove the patient's name from the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset prior to uploading it to B&A. This will ensure that the patient does not receive any correspondence about the survey.
3. The patient's envelope, containing the patient's details, should then be shredded immediately.

4.2 Opting out following discharge

Eligible participants can also opt out by:

- calling the National Inpatient Experience Survey Freephone number: 1800 314 093
- logging onto www.yourexperience.ie
- emailing info@yourexperience.ie
- returning the freepost survey pack in the post
- not responding to the survey.

Requests to opt out will be processed and logged in the National Inpatient Experience Survey Opt-out File. The participant's details will be destroyed at the end of the respective survey cycle.

5. A review of death notifications

The National Inpatient Experience Survey involves the input of participants' details following their discharge from hospital. There is a risk that some participants may die over the course of the survey period. As part of the quality assurance process, it is essential that adequate and standardised measures are taken to prevent the distribution of survey packs to deceased participants, wherever possible. A nominated staff member within each hospital will be responsible for this process.

Each participating hospital is responsible for the following steps:

Step 1: review available resources as per the schedule shown in Table 5 on the next page.

Step 2: verify deceased participants' details, against the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset.

Step 3: upload the names to the death check dataset, as per the data fields outlined in Table 6 on the next page.

Step 4: save the dataset and apply the correct filename.

Filename format: **DC_your assigned hospital code_date of upload**
e.g. Naas General Hospital: **DC_NGH_081021**

Step 5: upload Death check dataset as per agreed timelines in Table 5.

Step 6: delete the dataset from the local computer and sFTP tunnel.

The HSE will acknowledge receipt of the death checks, and follow up where none have been received.

Date	Review of death notifications
Friday 8 October 2021	Review of death notifications for discharges from 1 September to 30 September inclusive.
Monday 25 October 2021	Review of death notifications for discharges from 1 September to 30 September inclusive.
Thursday 18 November 2021	Review of death notifications for discharges from 1 September to 30 September inclusive.

Table 5: Schedule for conducting and submitting death checks to B&A

Name	Usage
First name	For example, Ciara
Family name	For example, Murphy
Address line 1	Current address
Address line 2	Current address
Address line 3	Current address
Address line 4	Current address, if applicable
Address line 5	Current address, if applicable
Date of birth	dd/mm/yyyy
Date of death	dd/mm/yyyy
Source of death notification	For example, Nursing home, Relative, RIP.ie, G.P., Hospice, Other, Unknown
Hospital name	For example, Naas General Hospital

Table 6: Data fields for the National Inpatient Experience Survey death check file

Review of death notifications within each hospital

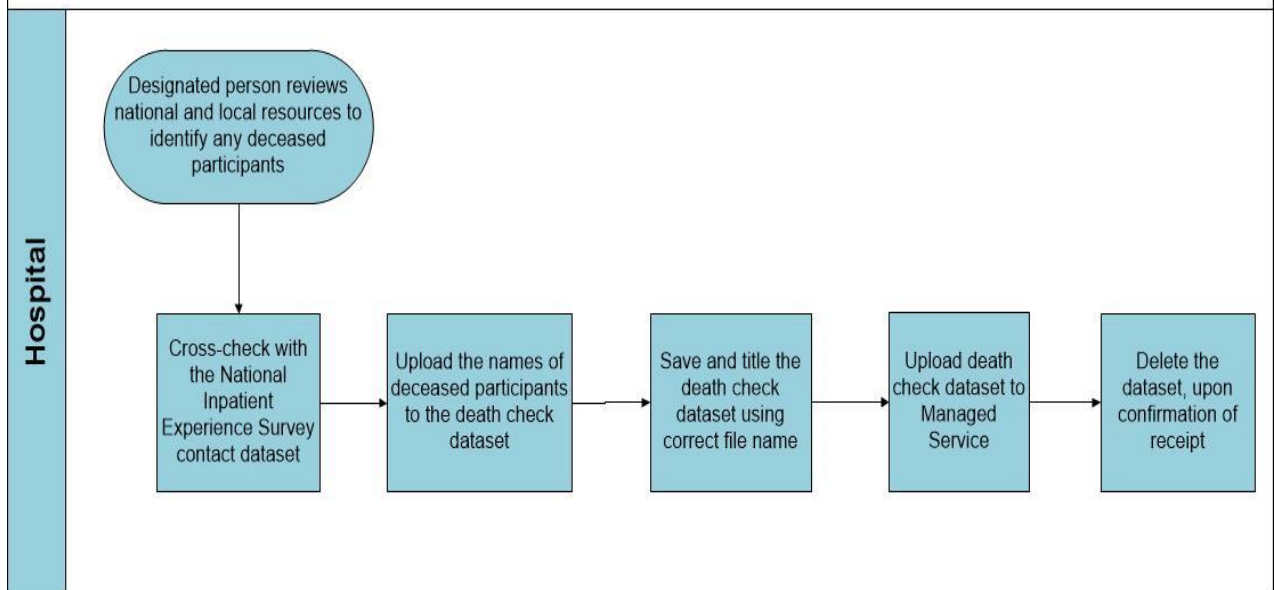


Figure 2: Death check process

6. Review of data quality

The National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset needs to be fully quality assured before being uploaded to B&A, to ensure that it is accurate and up to date. A designated staff member within the hospital will be assigned to the task of managing data quality for the National Inpatient Experience Survey on behalf of the hospital.

As part of the admission process, each hospital will be required to verify a patient's current address as the success of the survey is dependent on an accurate postal address. Please ensure that the relevant staff are aware of the importance of this step when recording patient details.

Table 7 below and Figure 3 on page 22 outline the data quality assurance process.

Data quality check	Description
1. All required fields are captured and complete.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All fields should be extracted from PAS and recorded in the format as per Table 2: National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset (page 9)
2. The accuracy of data fields has been verified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data should be provided under the correct fields, i.e. do not place data for 'admission source' in the 'discharge destination' field. Ensure that the format of dates are aligned correctly, i.e. dd/mm/yyyy.
3. The dataset only contains the details of eligible patients.	<p>Eligible participants must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be discharged between 1 and 31 September be aged 16 years or over (all participants born after 1 September 2005 should not be included) have stayed 24 hours or more in a public acute hospital

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> hold a postal address in the Republic of Ireland.
4. The dataset only contains eligible patients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Double check all codes so that no non-eligible participants are included.
5. The dataset is free of unnecessary characters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples include commas, full stops, etc., as these can interfere with the recognition of your hospital by the software collating the response data.
6. The hospital name and hospital group is consistent for each upload.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please adhere to the hospital's name, as outlined in Table 4 (page 13/14), at all times for each upload. Please do not use variations of the hospital name when naming files as the software collating the response data will view different names as two separate hospitals.
7. A review of death notices has been conducted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants who have died since their time of discharge must be identified and uploaded to the death check dataset to ensure no further correspondence is issued.
8. Audit every 10th record.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that each record contains accurate, complete and valid data as per the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset.
9. The file is saved appropriately with the correct filename and hospital code.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For examples, Naas General Hospital: NGH_041021_QA

Table 7: Review of data quality

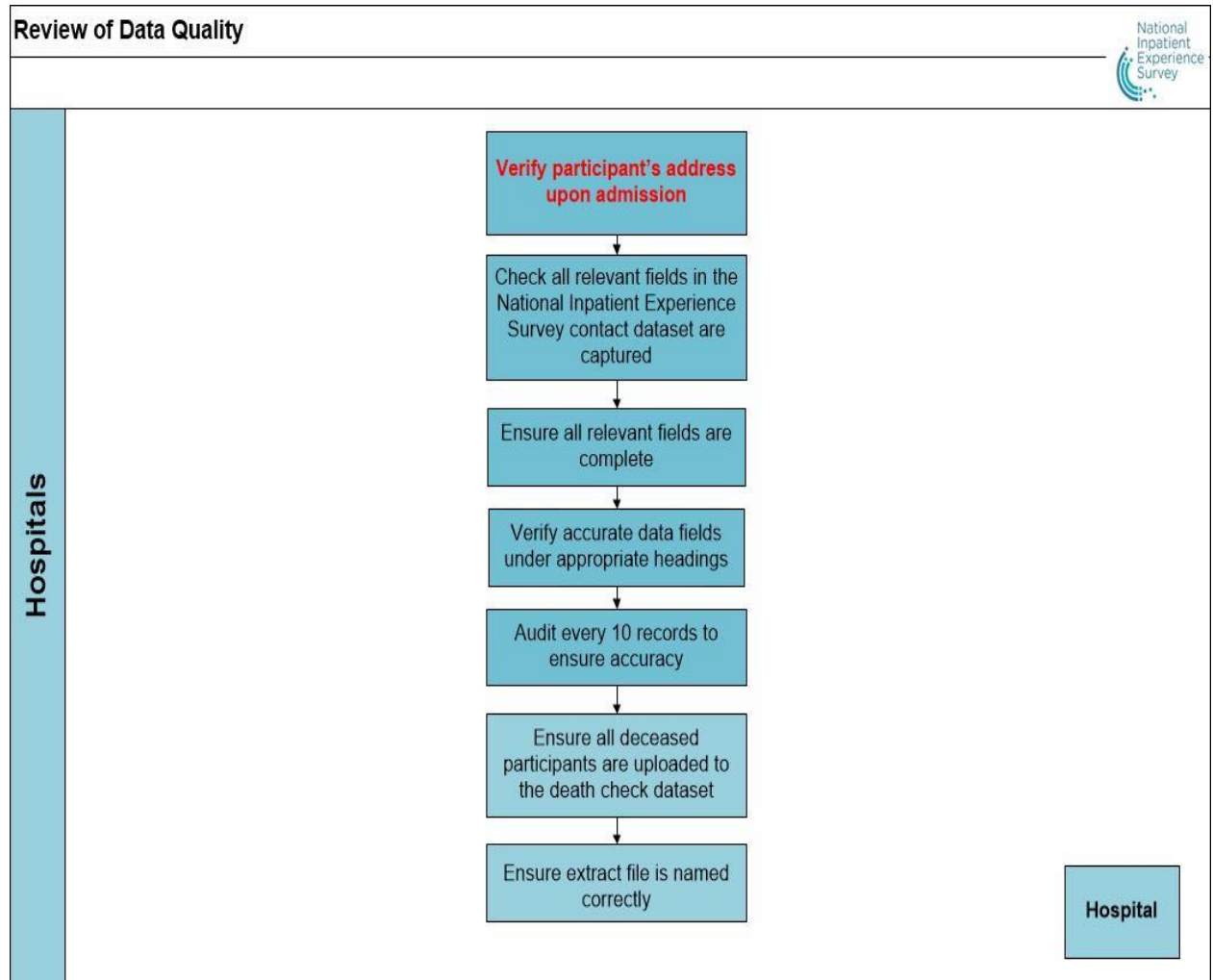


Figure 3: Review of data quality

6.1 Duplicates

Data quality checks should also include the identification and removal of duplicates. This means that if an eligible participant's details appear twice in the same National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset, the second set of the participant's details should be removed. Care should be taken to ensure that all of the data fields are formatted as outlined in the National Inpatient Experience Survey contact dataset, to avoid removing two different, eligible participants with similar or identical names.

6.2 Template for quality assurance checks before sending the file

General checks

- Ensure there are field headers in Row 1 of the file
- Ensure all the appropriate field headings are included and displayed exactly as shown below and in the order as shown below
- Remove any additional columns that are not displayed below
- Sort the file in alphabetical order and ensure you remove all duplicates
- File Name should be displayed as e.g. NGH_020621_QA.xls. Quality assurance must be on the end. If there is no QA it will be assumed that this has not been quality assured.
- Remove NULL from any fields.

Field	Sample text	Checks
First name	Ciara	
Family name	Murphy	
Address line 1	Dr Steevens Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that there are only address details in the field, no additional comments or remarks. ▪ No commas, dashes or unnecessary characters.
Address line 2	Steevens Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that there are only address details in the field, no additional comments or remarks. ▪ No commas, dashes or unnecessary characters.

Address line 3	Dublin 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there are only address details in the field, no additional comments or remarks. No commas, dashes or unnecessary characters.
Address line 4	Dublin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there are only address details in the field, no additional comments or remarks. No commas, dashes or unnecessary characters.
Address line 5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there are only address details in the field, no additional comments or remarks. No commas, dashes or unnecessary characters.
Eircode	D08 W2A8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there are only address details in the field, no additional comments or remarks. No commas, dashes or unnecessary characters.
Date of birth	01/07/1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Format should be dd/mm/yyyy. No quotation marks. Ensure there is no time in the field hh:mm. Ensure there are no spaces before the date of birth, do this by aligning the column to the right.
Sex	Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the full word "Female" or "Male" is in each column. There should not be an initial "F" or "M".
Date of Admission	04/09/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Format should be dd/mm/yyyy. No quotation marks. Ensure there is no time in the field hh:mm. Ensure there are no spaces before the date of birth, do this by aligning the column to the right.

Source of admission category	Emergency Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure this is appropriate Source Data.
Date of discharge	20/09/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Format should be dd/mm/yyyy. No quotation marks. Ensure there is no time in the field hh:mm. Ensure there are no spaces before the date of birth, do this by aligning the column to the right.
Discharge destination	Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure this is the appropriate Discharge Data.
Length of stay	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the minimum number is "1", this should be in days and not hours. Ensure that there are numbers ONLY, no text.
Hospital group	Dublin Midlands Hospital Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure you have the spelling and format exactly as displayed in Table 4 (page 13/14).
Hospital name	Naas General Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure you have the spelling and format exactly as displayed in Table 4 (page 13/14).
Hospital code	NGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure you have the spelling and format exactly as displayed in Table 4 (page 13/14).

Table 8: Template for quality assurance checks

Revision

Number	Effective date	Reason for update
01	1 May 2017	Original document release
02	1 May 2018	Revised in line with changes in survey programme
03	8 May 2018	Revised based on consultation with stakeholders
04	1 May 2019	Revised according to survey dates
05	1 May 2021	Revised due to effect of COVID-19 on hospital resources
06	1 September 2021	Revised due to effect of cyber-security attack on the HSE.

