

Relaxation of the COSD Schema for Mandatory Data Items

Dear Colleagues,

The Cancer Outcomes and Services Dataset (COSD) is the new national standard for reporting cancer in the NHS in England. It specifies the structure and content of the data items to be submitted electronically to the National Cancer Registration Service (NCRS) on a monthly basis. As part of the standard, a Schema (version 3) has been developed and published in accordance with the COSD Specification.

As you have previously requested a copy of the COSD schema documentation, we are writing to advise you of an interim arrangement which has been introduced regarding the validation of mandatory items in the schema.

One aspect of the COSD specification is that it defines certain items as mandatory within each section which is not then valid for submission until all these mandatory items are present. On-going testing and implementation of COSD submissions has identified some issues with the strict enforcement of this at source.

Whilst we are not intending to relax the mandation on Providers to collect these mandatory data items where applicable, it is important that all available data is submitted as soon as possible even if some mandatory items are missing. To resolve this issue, the COSD Governance Board has decided to temporarily relax the XML validation rules in the COSD schema for mandatory items (excluding Core Linkage data items) in order to maximise the data items which can be submitted.

As a result of this decision, we are asking that software developers modify their XML extracts accordingly and we can provide a modified version of the schema which is available on request from the [COSD helpdesk](#). This modified schema uses the preferred solution in which Mandatory data items which do not contain data will be omitted from that section of the schema. This modification to the schema allows zero minimum occurrence thus following the same rules applied to the required items.

Where developers have already adopted a different solution please do advise us at the email address below.

Although this change will mean that blank/null values in mandatory data items (except Core Linkage data items) will not prevent a section from being submitted, we would ask that you retain any functionality which flags blank/null values in mandatory data items for Providers in order to inform them of the need to complete this data when it becomes available.

This change does not alter the published COSD Schema - the change is an interim arrangement during the implementation phase of COSD and will be subject to review prior to 2015.

The relaxed validation does not apply to the Core Linkage items[1] which will still be mandated for all records submitted.

In order to support the technical development work going forward, the NCRS will create a technical liaison group open to all system suppliers. This forum will provide an expert environment for face-to-face discussion to ensure that ambiguities and technical issues can be addressed. The first meeting will be arranged in late May. Suppliers who would like to be involved should register an interest with

the COSD helpdesk.

If you have any questions or queries regarding the above, or would like to request a copy of the interim schema, please contact the COSD helpdesk (cosd@ncin.org.uk) in the first instance.

[1] NHS NUMBER and/or LOCAL PATIENT IDENTIFIER
NHS NUMBER STATUS INDICATOR CODE
PERSON BIRTH DATE
ORGANISATIONAL CODE (CODE OF PROVIDER)
PRIMARY DIAGNOSIS (ICD)
DATE OF DIAGNOSIS or DATE OF RECURRENCE

Yours sincerely,

The National Cancer Intelligence Network

[Forward this email](#)



This email was sent to constantcontact@ncin.org.uk by cosd@ncin.org.uk |
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

The National Cancer Intelligence Network | 5th Floor, Wellington House | 133-135 Waterloo Road | London | SE1 8UG |
United Kingdom