

NEWSLETTER



October 2025

Welcome to NICOR's latest e-bulletin. This edition focuses on the latest news and developments at NICOR.

With the dedication of the clinical teams in hospitals, technology enhancements, and the analytical transformation of data into information, we are committed to supporting local teams in their drive to improve patient outcomes.

In this edition:

- National Cardiac Audit Programme (2024/25 and 2022/25 data) annual reports
- Aortic dataset integration into NACSA – v6 released
- Update on NICOR Data Access Requests: New process with NHS England
- NICOR granted Section 251 approval
- EuroHeart collaboration
- New study shows substantial variation in heart attack treatment
- Clinical Leads - Moving on
- Who is NICOR? Patient information leaflet
- In memoriam
- NICOR contact details

Publications

National Cardiac Audit Programme (2024/25 and 2022/25 data) annual reports

The 2025 National Cardiac Audit Programme (2024/25 and 2022/25 data) annual reports have been submitted to NHS England for approval. Once approved, it is expected the publication of the reports will be 11th December 2025.

The annual report is supported with 10 interactive sub-specialty clinical reports with additional reference to the National Audit of Cardiac Rehabilitation. The interactive reports provide more detailed domain-level analyses and commentary allowing focus on the information that is of most interest to the reader (for example drilling down to explore the performance of different parts of the country and individual hospitals). Alongside the annual report, a dedicated Annual Report for Patients, Carers and the Public will be published. The 2025 annual reports will cover the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 (or between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2025 for sub-specialties that report on a three-year period).

You can read the current annual reports and the next annual reports once they are published via the [NICOR website](#).

Data & reporting

Aortic dataset integration into NACSA

National Adult Cardiac Surgery Audit (NACSA) Aortic Dataset – v6 released.

We are pleased to announce the release of the [NACSA Aortic dataset \(version 6\)](#). This updated version introduces an expanded range of aortic-specific fields, along with various enhancements and additions to the current dataset (v5.2.0).

Notable updates include the introduction of fields to support future EuroSCORE 3 calculations, as well as the inclusion of a Frailty Score. In anticipation of this release, please be advised that the v5.1.0 dataset is expected to be closed to further imports. It is essential that centres begin preparations to transition to the new dataset at the earliest opportunity. More information is available via the NICOR website: [New dataset for NACSA](#).

Update on NICOR Data Access Requests: New process with NHS England

The submission process for NICOR data access requests has transitioned to NHS England and is now managed through the central [Data Access Request Service \(DARS\)](#).

Although administrative oversight is provided by NHS England, NICOR's involvement continues to be integral. At the initial stage, the NICOR team will provide subject matter expertise, assessing feasibility and ensuring appropriate project design. Thereafter, applicants will be supported through the administrative process by NHS England.

NICOR's data team will remain responsible for the preparation of high-quality data extracts for approved projects. This combined approach ensures continuity across both the advisory and technical dimensions of NICOR's contribution, thereby preserving the scientific and clinical value of the datasets.

NICOR granted Section 251 approval

NICOR has been granted approval under Section 251 of the NHS Act 2006 for all 10 audits and registries. Applications must be submitted to the Health Research Authority (HRA) Confidentiality Advisory Group (CAG) every 12 months for approval. Approval of Section 251 means NICOR can use patient identifiable data, without obtaining patient consent, for audit or medical research. This is vital for NICOR's work to enable hospitals and healthcare improvement bodies to monitor and improve the quality of care and outcomes of cardiovascular patients. For further information on Section 251 and the NICOR's CAG references, visit [NICOR's website](#).

Latest developments

EuroHeart collaboration

During the recent European Society of Cardiology (ESC) Congress in Madrid, the EuroHeart programme reported on developments in the collection and analysis of acute coronary syndrome (ACS) data. For the first time, this incorporated contributions from two major NICOR National Clinical Audits: the Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project (MINAP) and the National Audit of Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (NAPCI).

EuroHeart is an international registry initiative with the primary objective of defining and implementing standardised data frameworks for cardiovascular disease. The programme has established consensus-based data standards for ACS, enabling harmonisation of clinical information across participating countries. Future directions include the extension of these standards to additional cardiovascular domains, such as valvular heart disease and heart failure, to support cross-national benchmarking, facilitate comparative effectiveness research, and improve quality of care.

The continued success of EuroHeart and related initiatives is contingent upon both the robustness of the data collected and the sustained engagement of contributing centres and clinicians. The efforts of all participants are gratefully acknowledged, as their commitment underpins the advancement of collaborative cardiovascular research and quality improvement.

New study shows substantial variation in heart attack treatment

A new study using the National Institute for Cardiovascular Outcomes Research (NICOR) Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project (MINAP) data highlights substantial variation in how patients hospitalised at English hospitals are managed for acute myocardial infarction (AMI), particularly patients with non-ST-elevation myocardial infarction (NSTEMI) and reduced kidney function.

Analysing data from over 360,000 AMI admissions between 2014 and 2019, researchers observed variation in the use of invasive management strategies – namely, angiography, percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) and coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) – versus conservative management. Patients with worse kidney function were notably less likely to receive invasive care, even after adjusting for other factors.

These findings highlight the need for further work to evaluate the comparative effectiveness of invasive versus conservative management strategies among people with reduced kidney function to reduce variation in care and improve outcomes for patients.

You can read the new study in full via the [BMJ Open Journals](#).

Further information about MINAP including the data, is available via the [NICOR website](#).

In the spotlight

Clinical Leads moving on – thank you

Three clinical leads for NICOR's speciality domains with the National Cardiac Audit Programme are stepping down from their roles. They have supported NICOR and the NCAP for many years and we would like to thank them for their dedication, leadership and expertise. They have been strong advocates of NICOR and the collection of data to help improve cardiovascular health services across the country.

We would like to wish Dr Clive Weston, and Mr Andrew Goodwin all the best for the future and thank them for their time at NICOR. Professor Theresa McDonagh will be stepping down in the next few months.

As announced in [NICOR's May newsletter](#), NICOR is pleased to welcome newly appointed elect Clinical Leads for three of the clinical speciality domains within the National Cardiac Audit Programme. They have extensive knowledge of their speciality areas and current experience in frontline NHS services. They are:

- Dr Chris Gale, Clinical Lead, Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project (MINAP)
- Dr Suzanna Hardman, Clinical Lead Elect, National Heart Failure Audit (NHFA)
- Mr Uday Trivedi, Clinical Lead, National Adult Cardiac Surgery Audit (NACSA).

How can we ensure that patients and carers know about NICOR? Patient information leaflet

We're asking for colleagues and stakeholders to help us on our mission to raise awareness with cardiovascular patients, carers and the public about NICOR and our purpose. Do your patients or their carers, or the public know they can check to see how well their local hospital is delivering heart care to its patients? Do they know they can access this information and other cardiovascular data available on NICOR's website?

To help raise awareness of NICOR and the work we do, a patient information leaflet has been produced. The leaflet informs patients, carers and the public about NICOR, our purpose and mission to help improve cardiac care across NHS hospitals and how we achieve this. This includes how we collect data without patient consent (with permission from the HRA CAG), for audit and research purposes, and the importance of these data. The leaflet includes signposting to the NCAP interactive reports, patient information and NICOR's privacy statement.

We're also keen to recruit new members to NICOR's Community Representation Group (CRG). We want to hear from patients and caregivers, about their experience living with the heart conditions highlighted by the NCAP. Please support NICOR on our mission to raise awareness of the important work we do, and help us to recruit new members to our CRG by sharing a copy of the patient leaflet in patient waiting areas and wards, and share across any local or national networks or charities that may be interested. You can download and share a [digital version](#) or download a [print ready version](#) to share on patient notice boards or to distribute directly to patients. For more information on becoming a CRG member, you can [download the membership pack](#) from the website. Thank you for your support.

On a final note

FINAL THOUGHTS

In memoriam

Recently, we were informed of the very sad news that James Bradley, a member of the Community Representative Group (CRG) and member of the National Audit Cardiac Rhythm Management (NACRM) Domain Expert Group (DEG), has passed away. James passed away in July following a short illness. James was an invaluable member of the NACRM DEG and CRG. James took his role as patient representative seriously and he brought a wealth of lived experience as a cardiac patient and patient advocate. Messages of condolence have been sent to James's family. He will be missed by everyone.

NICOR contact details

This is a reminder that if you have any technical queries or are a new user looking to register or have any access issues, please email nicor.helpdesk@nhs.net.

For any NICOR audit enquiries (for anything specific to a particular audit), email nicor.auditenquiries@nhs.net.

For the Data Access Request Service (DARS) and application process, please visit the [Researchers](#) area of the NICOR website.

If you would like to submit an article for NICOR's next newsletter, or if you do not want to receive this newsletter, email nicor.auditenquiries@nhs.net to be removed from the distribution list.