

# NEWSLETTER

**March 2026**

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 support local teams in their drive to improve patient outcomes.

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## Data & reporting

### Annual reports 2026/27 – data submission deadline

It is important hospitals continue to submit data in a timely manner, and it is their responsibility to ensure the data are complete and accurate since we will be reporting on the data we receive from them.

We are planning on publishing half-year update report, on all clinical activity in participating hospitals up to 30 September 2025. All relevant data should now have been received by NICOR.

The data submission deadline for the next full report cycle is **31 May 2026**. All NHS hospitals are required to complete the data submissions by this date, extensions are not available. This will enable NICOR to complete the downloads and produce the next annual reports for 2026/27 (2025/26 data or for 2023/24 to 2025/26 for sub-specialties that report on a three-year period). We have been requested to identify all hospitals that do not fully participate. The data submission deadlines can be downloaded from the [NICOR website](#).

A helpful user guide is available on NICOR's [interactive reports webpage](#). To ensure data security, it is essential that hospitals submit their data via the NICOR secure web portal. Please **do not** send any patient-identifiable information via email. Guidance on how and where to submit hospital data is provided below. If you have any questions, please email us at [nicor.auditenquiries@nhs.net](mailto:nicor.auditenquiries@nhs.net).

# Publications

## National Cardiac Audit Programme publishes second 2025 annual report

The [National Cardiac Audit Programme \(NCAP\) has published its second edition of the 2025 Annual Report](#). This second edition, supported with 10 interactive sub-speciality clinical reports, and dedicated report for Patients, Carers and the Public, covers the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. For some analyses, information is provided covering a three-year period from 2022/23 to 2024/25.

The report highlights observations in three areas:

- Patient safety
- Productivity
- Prevention.

There is positive news. Overall, most cardiac services have returned to pre-pandemic levels. Waiting times for elective cardiac surgery are beginning to fall and cardiac surgeons have been able to operate on more cases. The number of patients with aortic valve disease receiving new valves is at an all-time high. More ablation procedures have been performed for patients with atrial fibrillation. New treatments are being introduced for patients at high risk of conventional open-heart surgery and others to help prevent stroke. Outcomes are good and complication rates are low.

There are also some important areas that need addressing. Four important messages are summarised succinctly in the accompanying [Patient and Carer report](#), written by Sarah Murray and members of the Community Representative Group (CRG). A copy of the patient and carer report has been translated and is [available to view in Welsh](#). Downloaded a copy from NICOR's website.

# Latest developments

## Collect, Analyse & Report (CAR)

To date, the Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI), Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion (LAAO), Percutaneous Foramen Ovale Closure (PFOC), Transcatheter Mitral and Tricuspid Valve (TMTV) Registries and, most recently, the National Congenital Heart Disease Audit (NCHDA) have been added to the CAR platform. The National Adult Cardiac Surgery Audit (NACSA) is currently undergoing User Acceptance Testing and is on track for rollout to all hospitals in early March.

Work is also progressing well on transitioning the National Audit of Percutaneous Coronary Interventions (NAPCI) and the Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project (MINAP) (including ambulance trust data import) onto CAR, with User Acceptance Testing expected to commence shortly. In addition, development has started to incorporate the National Heart Failure Audit (NHFA) and the National Audit of Cardiac Rhythm Management (NACRM) into the new version of the platform.

Several new features have recently been introduced in CAR, including:

- A session extension feature that confirms whether a user session is still active, helping to prevent unnecessary logouts
- The Ability to request data exports in Microsoft Excel format.

Further enhancements are already in development, including a duplicate checker tool designed to help identify duplicate patient records, procedures or admissions. More updates will follow as these developments progress.

# In the spotlight

## Clinical society national conference opportunities

NICOR's audits are set up with clinical input and backing from specialist cardiovascular societies. The professional societies bring together clinical leadership, doctors, specialists, researchers, and healthcare professionals to advance medical knowledge, establish clinical guidelines, and improve patient care standards. They serve as key bodies for networking, continuing education, and advocating for the interests of their members and the speciality.

Nationally, there are several cardiovascular societies that support NICOR. They are:

- [British Society for Heart Failure](#)
- [British Heart Rhythm Society \(BHRS\)](#)
- [British Cardiovascular Society](#)
- [British Congenital Cardiac Association](#)
- [British Cardiovascular Intervention Society \(BCIS\)](#)
- [Society for Cardiothoracic Surgery in Great Britain and Ireland \(SCTS\)](#).

Each cardiovascular society holds a number of national meetings and events. Visit their website for their full events calendar.

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

We included this section in a previous newsletter but are adding it again as it is important that all steps are taken to ensure that patients and carers, as well as all participating clinical colleagues, know about the results we generate.

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



### Do you know how well your hospital delivers heart care?

You can check out how well your local hospital delivers heart care to its patients by looking at the results of the National Cardiac Audit Programme\*.

These are freely available on the website of the National Institute for Cardiovascular Outcomes Research (NICOR) [www.nicor.org.uk](http://www.nicor.org.uk)



The National Cardiac Audit Programme produces several reports every year.

The main report summarises key findings. A Patient, Carer and Public report, written by patients and caregivers, provides a patient perspective, and there are several reports on different heart conditions and their treatment:

- Congenital heart disease (including heart surgery and other procedures for children)
- Heart attack care
- Stents and angioplasty
- Heart surgery in adults
- Heart failure
- Heart rhythm abnormalities
- Several non-surgical heart procedures:
  - Aortic valve procedures
  - Mitral and tricuspid valve procedures
  - Left atrial appendage procedures
  - Procedures to close a small hole in the heart
- Cardiac rehabilitation.

These reports are derived from data sent by hospitals to NICOR. The data are sent without patient consent, as permitted by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care after a recommendation from the Health Research Authority. For the audit purposes, NICOR is exempt from the National Data Opt-Out legislation, although this exemption does not apply for research purposes. You can find more details about this on the [NICOR website](#), especially on the [Patients and Carers page](#). There is also a Patient Information Leaflet and a Privacy Statement.

If you have any specific questions on any of the above reports, you can contact the programme at: [nicor.auditinquiries@nhs.net](mailto:nicor.auditinquiries@nhs.net)  
[Additional Patient Information Leaflet available by clicking here](#)  
[NICOR Privacy Statement available by clicking here](#)

\* supported by NHS England and NHS Wales



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

### **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](mailto:nicor.helpdesk@nhs.net).

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

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

For the latest news, you can follow [NICOR's X](#) account and [LinkedIn](#).

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](mailto:nicor.auditenquiries@nhs.net) to be removed from the distribution list.