

# KPIs for Australian Public Mental Health Services: PI 09 – New client index, 2015–

## Identifying and definitional attributes

<b>Metadata item type:</b>	Indicator
<b>Indicator type:</b>	Indicator
<b>Short name:</b>	MHS PI 09: New client index, 2015–
<b>METEOR identifier:</b>	584234
<b>Registration status:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Health</a>, Standard 19/11/2015</li></ul>

**Description:** Percentage of new consumers under the care of the mental health service organisation's mental health services.

**NOTE:** This indicator is related to MHS PI 09J: New client index (Jurisdictional level version). There are no technical differences in the calculation methodologies between the Service level version and the Jurisdictional level version of this indicator.

**Rationale:** Access to services by persons requiring care is a key issue and there is concern that public mental health service system is inadequately responding to new people requiring care.

Existing population treatment rates are relatively low.

There is concern that public sector mental health services invest a disproportionate level of resources in dealing with existing clients and too little in responding to the needs of new consumers as they present.

**Indicator set:** [Key Performance Indicators for Australian Public Mental Health Services \(Service level version\) \(2015–\)](#)  
[Health](#), Superseded 16/02/2021

## Collection and usage attributes

**Computation description:** Coverage/Scope:

All public mental health service organisations.

The following exclusions apply:

- Mental health clients for which a unique person identifier was not recorded, that is non-uniquely identifiable clients, are to be excluded.

Methodology:

- Tracking a consumer's service use back from the date of first contact in the reference period should be calculated as the five years preceding the date of first contact rather than on a calendar or financial year basis.
- Consumer counts should be unique at the organisation level.

**Computation:**  $(\text{Numerator} \div \text{Denominator}) \times 100$

**Numerator:** Number of new consumers who received services from the mental health service organisation's specialised mental health services within the reference period.

**Numerator data elements:****Data Element / Data Set****Guide for use**

A new client is defined as a consumer who has not been seen in the five years preceding the first contact with the mental health service organisation in the reference period (inpatient, residential or community).

**Denominator:**

Number of consumers who received services from the mental health service organisation's specialised mental health services within the reference period.

**Disaggregation:**

Service variables: Setting, target population

Consumer attributes: Age, SEIFA, remoteness, Indigenous status

## Representational attributes

**Representation class:** Percentage

**Data type:** Real

**Unit of measure:** Person

## Indicator conceptual framework

**Framework and dimensions:**

[Accessible](#)

## Accountability attributes

**Benchmark:**

Levels at which indicator can be useful for benchmarking:

- mental health service organisation
- regional group of services
- state/territory.

**Further data development / collection required:**

This indicator cannot be accurately constructed using mental health National Minimum Data Sets because they do not include unique patient identifiers that allow links across data sets and financial reporting years.

There is no proxy solution available. Construction of this indicator at a national level requires separate indicator data to be provided individually by states and territories.

Development of state-wide unique patient identifiers within all mental health NMDSs is needed to improve this capacity.

**Other issues caveats:**

- This indicator presents complexities at the analysis stage. For example, there are several approaches to defining 'new client' that depend on how the following issues are resolved:
  - Level of the mental health system at which 'newness' is defined: Consumers new to a particular organisation may be existing consumers of other organisations. Counts of new consumers at the state/territory level would certainly yield lower estimates than those derived from organisation-level counts.
  - Diagnosis criteria for defining 'newness': A consumer may present with a new condition, although they have received previous treatment for a different condition.
- To date, the approach has been to specify an initial measure for implementation with a view to further refinement following detailed work to address the complexities associated with the definition of a new consumer and the possible implementation of unique state-wide patient identifiers within all jurisdictions.
- This work does not take into account the activities of private mental health services, primary mental health care or the specialist private mental health sector.

## Source and reference attributes

**Reference documents:** Key Performance Indicators for Australian Public Mental Health Services, Third edition (2014)

## Relational attributes

**Related metadata references:** Has been superseded by [KPIs for Australian Public Mental Health Services: PI09 – New Client Index, 2018 \(Service level\)](#)

- [Health](#), Superseded 16/02/2021