Using MHSDS open data: a pipeline to scrape and prepare NHS Digital tables

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MHSDS: the Mental Health Services Dataset – what is it?

Data submission is mandatory if NHS-funded (partial or total)

Submit data to NHS Digital

Processes data into a Data product

Shares with CCG / NHS

Open data on website
What does it include?

Metrics by provider, CCG or national level on:

- People in contact with MH services
- Referrals & first contacts
- Children and young people metrics – incl. eating disorders

BUT

- No waiting times
- No adult talking therapies

Link to online Power BI dashboard
Why does this data matter?

The Guardian
Young mental health referrals double in England after lockdowns
As cases hit record high and waiting lists grow, private child psychiatrists report surge in self-funded patients.
15 Jul 2021

The Telegraph
NHS mental health referrals to surge by a third due to pandemic
Health service braced for an extra 1.8 million cases over three years, as experts call for £5bn funding to improve mental health provision.
1 week ago

Sky News
Eating disorder services under 'constant pressure' after COVID lockdown
NHS data on eating disorders shows a fourfold increase in the number of children and young people waiting for urgent care. Mental health nurse...
19 May 2021
What’s missing?

- High quality statistics
- Transparent metadata
- Data quality reports
- Updated monthly

- Time series data in one place
- API
How can we get around this?

1. Get spreadsheets from website
2. Clean and append into longitudinal format

Run monthly to refresh!

Open data on website

NHS-web-scraper.R
How does it work?

Find patterns in html code to find links to all the right files in the NHS Digital website.
What can I do with the resulting data?

https://sgpeytrignet.shinyapps.io/MHSDS-dashboard/
Can I do the same with other NHS open data?

Yes!

Other examples exist for maternity and A&E datasets as well.

https://github.com/sg-peytrignet/MHSDS-pipeline
Thank you!

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