

# PRIMHD OUTCOME REPORT 8 - INDEX OF SEVERITY

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

NOVEMBER 2009 - VERSION 1

### WHAT IS THE INDEX OF SEVERITY?

The Index of Severity used by Te Pou is adapted from a system developed by Dr Paul Lelliot (UK) further developed by Alberto Parabiaghi (Italy) which categorises severity into four groups (sub-clinical, mild, moderate and severe) depending on the scores of the first 10 items of the HoNOS/HoNOS65+ or the first 13 items of the HoNOSCA.

### WHY USE INDEX OF SEVERITY?

The Index of Severity provides a different perspective on outcomes information from other report formats like total scores or clinically significant items. It supports monitoring of caseloads by indicating caseload complexity that is consistent with severity of illness.

Severity of illness is considered a better predictor of clinical contact time than the number of service users on a caseload. It is also more difficult to work exclusively with service users who are severely ill, as per the index of severity, than with service users who may be a mixture of mildly, moderately and severely ill.

At team/service level, this report may also help by providing a rationale for discharge and transfer from a service, and with referral to new services.

### HOW IS THE INDEX OF SEVERITY CALCULATED?

It is calculated using the first 10 items of the HoNOS/HoNOS65+ and the first 13 items of the HoNOSCA, as follows:

Severity	Description	Condition
0	Sub-clinical	All items rated <2
1	Mild	At least one item >1 and all items <3
2	Moderate	At least one item >=3
3	Severe	At least two items >=3

### HOW CAN THIS INFORMATION BEST BE PRESENTED?

The most effective way to present this information is in a stacked bar graph with the 'severe' category at the bottom of the stack. Examples of this are shown overleaf.

Information can be analysed comparing the number or percentage in each category by reason for collection, ethnicity/setting and team.

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### HOW CAN THE INDEX OF SEVERITY BE INTERPRETED?

There are some key points to note in interpreting this information:

- Service users in the 'sub-clinical' category have no HoNOS measure scores from the relevant items in the clinical range (items rated 2 or over).
- Service users in the 'mild' category have only scores which are barely in the clinically range with all scores being under 3 and at least one item with a mild problem.
- Those in the 'moderate' category have only one item which is a moderate or severe problem.
- Those in the 'severe' category have two or more items which are a moderate or severe problem.

### HOW CAN THIS INFORMATION BE UTILISED?

The level of severity gives an indication of the severity of the group of service users in a service, team or ethnic group. It can be used to understand the difference between severity at admission, review and discharge (non-casemix adjusted). It can assist services/teams in discussions around appropriateness of services for particular groups of service users, i.e. why service users who are in the sub-clinical and/or mild categories are being admitted? This report will be useful for workforce development, recruitment and training.

### LIMITATIONS OF THIS REPORT

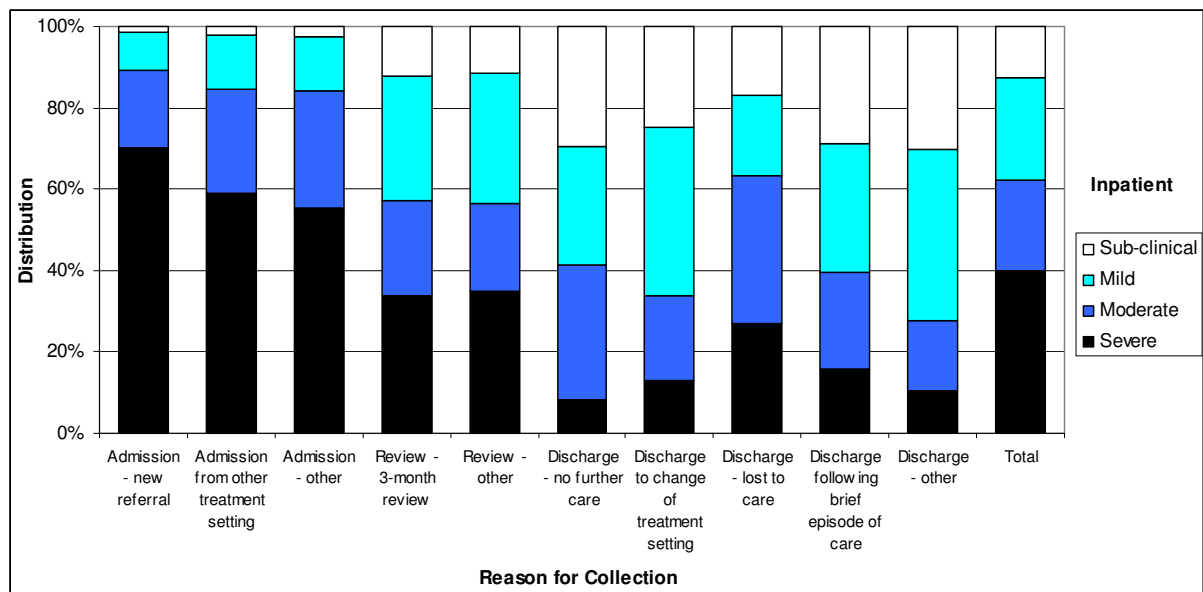
The index of severity does not show individual item scores to identify which items scored in the clinical range for either of the moderate or severe categories. Again a reminder that HoNOS does not measure everything, i.e. there could be a reason other than what is covered in HoNOS for a service user to be in the service. This report should be used in conjunction with other PRIMHD Outcome Reports. These tables are not casemix adjusted to take account of the differences in the mix of service users between different teams and DHBs.

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**Figure 1: Distribution of Index of Severity, by Reason for Collection, HoNOS Inpatient**



Note 1: When there is under 30 observations the data is excluded from this graph.

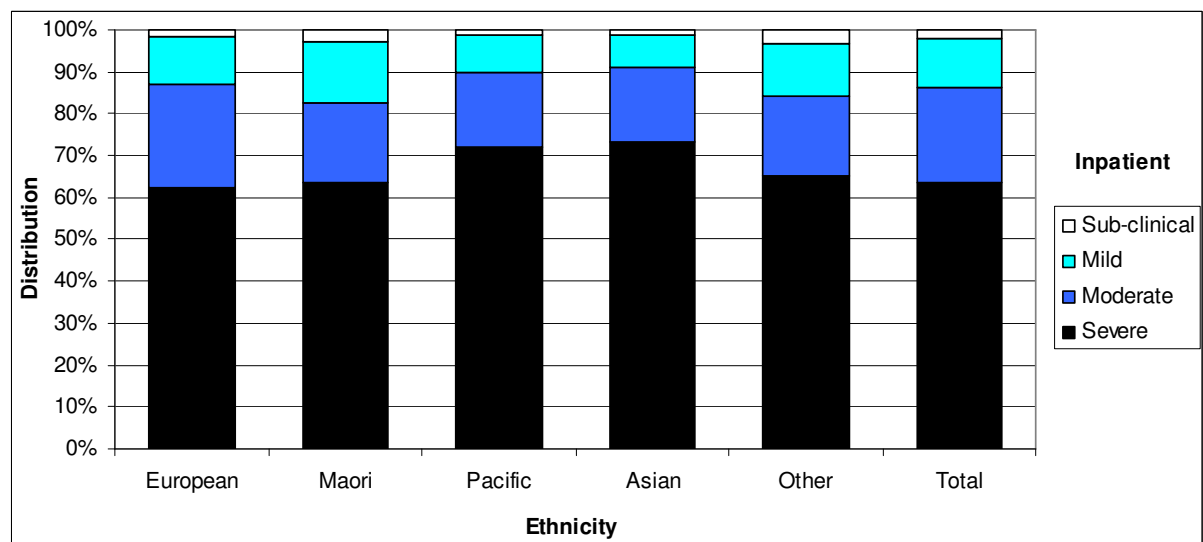
Note 2: Index of Severity Key: Sub-clinical = All items rated <2; Mild = A least one item >1 and all items <3;

Moderate = At least one item >=3; Severe = At least two items >=3.

Note 3: For HoNOS/HoNOS65+, Index of Severity includes only Items 1-10.

Note 4: This report is not casemix adjusted.

**Figure 2: Distribution of Index of Severity, by Ethnicity and Setting, HoNOS**



Note 1: Index of Severity Key: Sub-clinical = All items rated <2; Mild = A least one item >1 and all items <3;

Moderate = At least one item >=3; Severe = At least two items >=3.

Note 2: For HoNOS/HoNOS65+, Index of Severity includes only Items 1-10.

Note 3: This report is not casemix adjusted.