SACTv3.0 Outcomes Upload - Introduction

Revised May 2020

Background

Treatment outcomes are currently captured by six data items as part of the main data upload in the latest SACT dataset Version 3 (item numbers 38, 57-59, 60-61).

These data items are essential to evaluate treatment efficacy in routine clinical practice, establish the benefits of treatment to patients and inform selection of the most appropriate approach to patient management.

Outcomes information submitted to the SACT dataset also play an important role in the evaluation of treatments in the Cancer Drugs Fund (CDF). Analysis of this information informs NICE committee decisions and is used to help decide whether treatments should be made routinely available.

Challenges of outcomes collection

Despite their critical importance, submission of regimen outcomes to the SACT dataset can be challenging for trusts. Low outcomes completion result in lengthy manual follow-up with trusts, but can also undermine stakeholders' confidence in the data and limit our ability to evaluate treatment effectiveness.
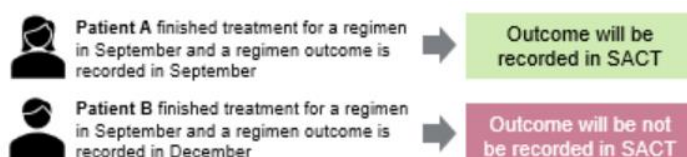
There are two main situations which result in outcomes being missed in the SACT dataset:

1. Outcomes are recorded in the hospital system, but are not submitted to the SACT team – "Lost" outcomes
2. Outcomes are not recorded in the hospital system

SACT treatment outcomes will often be input into trust systems at a later date after treatment activity. In many cases this time delay is required to evaluate the impact of a treatment before outcomes can be confirmed. However, this delay also means outcomes are recorded after the final treatment activity has been submitted to the SACT dataset. In these cases, outcomes will be present on trust systems but missing from the national SACT dataset.

Below is an illustration of this issue:

Illustration

Patient A finished treatment for a regimen in September and a regimen outcome is recorded in September → Outcome will be recorded in SACT

Patient B finished treatment for a regimen in September and a regimen outcome is recorded in December → Outcome will be not be recorded in SACT

The outcomes upload is an initiative developed by PHE to address the practical challenges of outcomes submission (i.e. the "Lost outcomes" situation) and support trusts to report this data. This upload is only applicable to outcomes that have been recorded by the trust, in other words the second situation described above will require separate tailored solutions.

Outcomes upload pilot

From April to December 2018 a pilot was conducted to assess the feasibility of the outcomes upload. During this time the SACT team worked with e-prescribing systems providers to develop an outcomes upload. This upload was deployed to 6 pilot trusts who submitted data in December 2018. The pilot was successful and confirmed that it is possible to collect additional regimen outcomes and match them to existing treatment records. There was a significant 50% increase in the number of outcomes received from the trusts that took part in the pilot.

Following this successful pilot, a stakeholder consultation process was conducted to agree next steps. Trust pharmacists, informatics staff, clinicians and NHSE commissioners attended a workshop and agreed a more widespread implementation of the upload in line with the process detailed below.

Scope of the SACT outcomes upload

The outcomes upload is designed to capture these additional outcomes which have been recorded in a trust system but not included in the original SACT submissions.
The upload contains 18 items only, covering information needed to link patients to existing SACT records and treatment outcomes fields. Those items are a subset of the main SACT upload, and no new items are required.

The upload includes patients based on the **date when the outcomes summary was recorded in the hospital system, regardless of when the treatment activity took place (which is the criteria for inclusion in the main SACT upload).** This is not a SACT data item but an audit field within e-prescribing systems (for more information on how to do this please read the "outcomes upload specification document"). It should capture additional outcomes which have been completed by trusts at a later date post-treatment activity.

Implementation

- The SACT outcomes upload launched in **September 2019** to coincide with the revised SACTv3.0 dataset
- Submission of the outcomes upload started from **November 2019** for **outcome summary items completed in September 2019**
- There will be a 12-month phased implementation period
- Monthly submission of the outcomes upload will be **required from December 2020**

- Outcomes should continue to be included in the standard SACTv3 upload as well if they are available at the time of treatment activity
- Trusts may start to submit the outcomes upload at any time within the 12-month implementation period. Trusts need to be able to submit SACTv3.0 files before they can submit the outcomes upload.
  - Trusts may first submit a test file to the SACT Helpdesk secure email for troubleshooting purposes if they so wish
  - The SACT team are continuing to work with systems providers to develop the outcomes upload and we appreciate trust timelines for implementation will be influenced by the ability of systems providers to deploy the outcomes upload.

More details on specific file requirements for submission are available in the "Outcomes upload specification" document.

Monitoring

Reports at Outcome level can already be consulted on SACT platform CancerStats 2 as part of the treatment activity reporting. The evolution in the number of regimens outcomes 'expected' and 'received' will be monitored over time during the implementation of the separate outcomes upload to evaluate its impact. Activity is available in reports by treatment intent, and at trust level allowing trust to monitor their performance.

Additional information

The accompanying "Outcomes upload data specification" should be read in conjunction with this document. It provides the technical details of the outcomes upload content and describes how data will be linked to existing SACT records, including any requirements for upload submission.

An "Outcomes upload example format" is also attached. It shows the standard header row and required format of the upload. Please note this pre-specified header row and upload format is essential.

The team will look to produce additional resources on Outcomes, which will be communicated to trusts in due course and made available on the SACT Community. A working group will be convened on this topic over the course of 2020 and learning will be shared with trusts.

If you have any further questions or would like to discuss the requirements of the SACT outcomes upload and how it is designed to complement your standard upload please contact the SACT Helpdesk (SACT@phe.gov.uk) or post a question on the Forum Page of the SACT Community