

FAQ's

- 1. The numbers in my log book don't match those on the SWORD database** – There are a number of possible reasons for this. Remember that the HES data collects all cases done under your name ie including those done as emergencies or electively by your registrar. The next generation of HES data will be able to identify operating surgeon as well as Consultant in charge but this field is not available yet.
- 2. The database shows that I have performed an operation I don't perform** – This is a coding error at entry level. One thing this database will inevitably do is to engage us more with our nursing and admin staff to ensure that the correct patients and operations are attributable to the correct surgeons.
- 3. My operative numbers appear too low - I have performed operations that do not appear to be in the dataset** – Most codes are fairly standard now but some, particularly Bariatric procedures, have been developed since the original code books and different ways of coding those operations have arisen in different hospitals. In each operation group there is a section which shows you which codes have been included and which excluded. Again SWORD will highlight what we are being coded for and give us the opportunity to talk to coders within our trusts to ensure that the correct codes are used and also therefore that the trusts receive the appropriate remuneration for the procedure.
- 4. I perform NHS work in a private hospital. Will this be recorded?** – SWORD capture all NHS work performed in any setting - NHS trust, ITC or private hospitals. It does not collect any information on private patient activity whether performed in the NHS or private hospitals
- 5. I am concerned over the validity of HES data** – HES data is already collected and used by many organizations. It has become increasingly more accurate as doctors have become more involved with coding and trust re-imburement has been linked to the HES coding. The unique point about SWORD is that for the first time it allows Consultants to access the data that is being collected and stored about themselves and this in turn will allow them to influence future data collection and ensure it is more accurate.
- 6. Will this database be used by the public / NHS England / my trust to review my results and performance?** SWORD is password protected and individuals are only directly identifiable with their own pseudonomised code which is not given to anyone else. At the moment SWORD is only available to AUGIS / ALS members, although other surgical societies may join in due course. There are no plans for this database to be shared with any other agencies at present. Any individual could request this same data on any individual surgeon or trust under a freedom of information act if they wanted too, but not via SWORD.