Royal College of Physicians | Pulmonary Rehabilitation Services Accreditation Scheme

Understanding the pathway to accreditation for pulmonary rehabilitation

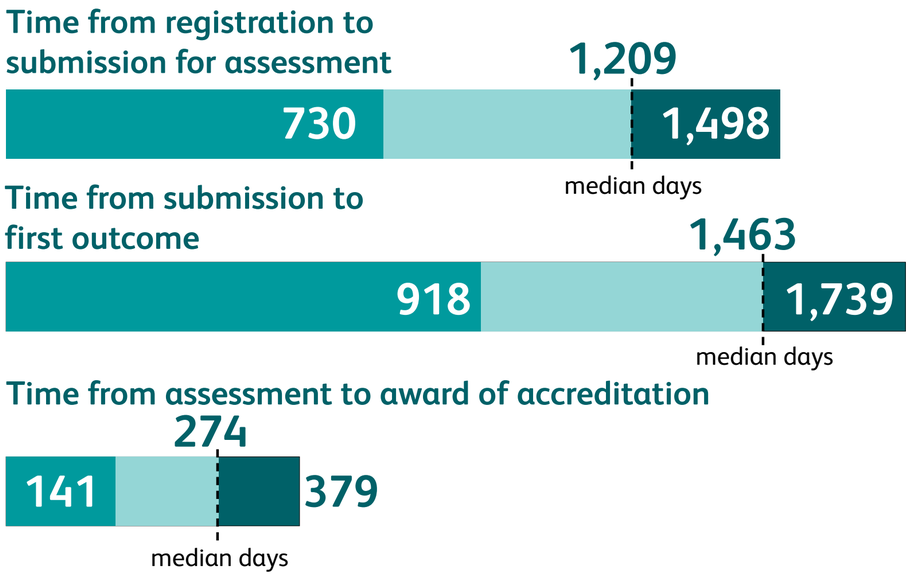
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Background

In 2018, the Royal College of Physicians launched an accreditation programme for pulmonary rehabilitation services in the UK, known as the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Services Accreditation Scheme PRSAS (www.prsas.org). This programme provides services with a framework to measure and improve quality and outcomes of care, ensures that services are delivering pulmonary rehabilitation in line with British Thoracic Society national guidance, and that they are supported within their organisational structure to deliver effective and efficient care. The framework used is based on the British Standard Institution specification for accreditation of clinical services. The accreditation standards comprise seven domains (40 standards) and cover all aspects of a high-quality PR service. With a number of services now successfully accredited, we carried out a study to determine the average time taken for services to achieve accreditation.

Method

This study is an exploratory analysis of all services that have received accreditation between the launch of the PRSAS programme and January 2025. When participating in the accreditation process, services may receive one of the following outcomes: accredited, 2-week action, deferral for 6 months or not accredited. The dates of submission to the programme were provided by month only, therefore this was assumed to be the 1st of the month. Data was analysed using SPSS software and treated as non-parametric data. Data is presented as median [lower, upper quartile]. Count data with fewer than five cases were not reported in the interests of anonymity.



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Results

As of January 2025, 158 services had registered for accreditation. A total of 42 services had requested an assessment, 28 had completed an assessment and 15 were awaiting assessment or assessment outcome. 22 (13.9%) services had received accreditation. Of those accredited, six (26%) were accredited following the assessment, 17 (74%) were deferred during the initial assessment, and no services failed to achieve accreditation. The median [lower, upper quartile] length of time from registration to submission for assessment was 1,209 [730, 1,498] days, and from submission to first outcome was 1,463 [918, 1,739] days. The median [lower, upper quartile] length of time from assessment to the award of accreditation (including the deferral phase) was 274 [141, 379] days.



Conclusion

Overall, 22 services have received accreditation in the UK. However, services take on average 1,209 days to submit their application for assessment. This was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Further work will explore reducing the length of time to submission, assessment and accreditation outcome.

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