



## Final Outputs Guidance & Checklist

### General Guidelines for Final Outputs Clearance

- When you want to disseminate your NILS results beyond your project team (named in the NILS licence) **you must obtain Final Outputs Clearance from the NILS Research Support Unit (NILS-RSU)** using the [NILS Final Outputs Clearance Form](#). This reduces the risk of disclosure, ensures that NILS and data are properly described and that the data have been used appropriately.
- Examples of final outputs are working papers, reports or journal articles intended for publication, presentations or abstracts.
- Current guidelines allow a maximum of **20 working days** for clearance of all final outputs, with the exception of conference/journal abstracts, for which **5 working days** are required.
- Although not a formal scientific review, the NILS-RSU can, under ethical procedures, provide comments that the researcher may consider.
- **In all cases, the Registrar General reserves the right to withhold clearance of any output if such an output would inhibit his ability to carry out his statutory duties. NILS-RSU to work with NILS Core on how best to manage this risk.**

### Final Outputs Clearance Criteria

#### **Definitions:**

- NISRA: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
- NILS: Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study
- NIMS: Northern Ireland Mortality Study

#### **Describing the NILS (see [NILS Working Paper 1.0](#) for further details):**

The NILS must be described correctly ensuring accuracy of the text and of substantive points about the NILS and its functions, for example:

- the NILS should not be described as being used to “track people”;
- the NILS & NIMS should be referred to as databases: data provided for researchers to use in analysis should normally be referred to as “datasets”;
- the NILS linkage method, sample size and content (i.e. that it includes data for Northern Ireland only) and study methodology (see below) should be described accurately; and
- the term “census-based” can be used in the title. However, formally the NILS is not census-based: sample members are initially derived from the NI health-card registration system, which are normally linked to the census returns. This should be properly reflected in the Methods section of any outputs. Researchers can also use the term “census-based” as key words for journals.

Researchers must make clear that [Distinct Linkage Project](#) datasets have no identifiable individual level data and are derived from linkages that are anonymised prior to handover to the research team.

#### **Methodology:**

- The NILS sample is made up of c. 28% of the NI population (approx 500,000 people)
- The NILS sample is selected using 104 dates of birth.
- Researchers should always refer to health card registrations NOT GP registrations.
- Values cannot be described as “missing”, more appropriate to refer to them as “non-response (missing/edited)”.

**Results:**

- Neither the results nor discussion must raise confidentiality/ disclosure issues. This also includes any possibility of differencing between tables within an article.
- There must be a longitudinal aspect to the research results.
- Reference to the data source 'NILS ' should be included in tables and figures, where appropriate.

**Acknowledgments:**

The following acknowledgment **must** be included in all final outputs:

“The help provided by the staff of the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study/Northern Ireland Mortality Study (NILS/NIMS) [delete as appropriate] and the NILS Research Support Unit is acknowledged. The NILS/NIMS [delete as appropriate] is funded by the Health and Social Care Research and Development Division of the Public Health Agency (HSC R&D Division) and NISRA. The NILS-RSU is funded by the ESRC and the Northern Ireland Government. The authors alone are responsible for the interpretation of the data and any views or opinions presented are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of NISRA/NILS.”

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