CRANE Database: Question and Answer (Q&A) Session
23 February 2026

1. What was the purpose of this session?

The annual Q&A session brought together cleft services from across the UK to:

- Clarify data requirements for the 2026 Annual Report and SSQD dashboards
- Answer service-led questions about data entry, submissions and governance
- Share updates on the database, consent forms, and new clinical fields
- Support teams in preparing for national reporting deadlines

2. Attendees

The meeting was facilitated by Dr Kate Fitzsimons, Senior Research Fellow for CRANE and Samriddhi Sharma, Project Coordinator for CRANE. It was attended by a total of 30 representatives from different specialities within almost all regional cleft services, as well as 3 CRANE team members.

Cleft Services- in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland	Number of attendees
Newcastle	1
Leeds	1
Northern Ireland	1
Manchester	3
Cleft Net East	2
North Thames	4
Scotland	2
South Wales	5
South West	1
Trent	2
Evelina London	6
Liverpool	1
The Spires	1
West Midlands	0
CRANE Project Team	3
Total	**33**

3. Key updates to the CRANE Database

Organisational Audit Report 2025

- [Published](#) July 2025 with 100% response from services
- Highlights workforce pressures, variation in access, and high engagement with CRANE

Annual Report 2025

- [Published](#) December 2025
- Included registry data, outcomes, audit findings, infographic and outlier responses

Updated family information leaflets & consent forms

- Redesigned with CLAPA, CNS teams and patient representatives
- Clearer, shorter, and country-specific (England/Wales, NI, Scotland)
- Reflect each nation's legal bases for data handling

Gestational age & birthweight

- The data items now required for all registrations (including non-consented cases) from 2026 onwards
- Gestational age includes "+days"
- Data items may move to 'Patient Details'. Will communicate if/when this happens.
- This change is due to Section 251 approval

5-year-old index

- Now open to complete BCLP cases (LAHSAL)
- Retrospective entry encouraged. Imports can facilitate this.

Psychology outcomes at 10 years

- Cleft Q & TIM fields (Psychological & Social Functioning)
- Expected to go live in May 2026

4. Data submission deadlines

Data Collection Milestones 2026

Annual Report- June 2026

- Submit updates by 28 June 2026
- Extract on 29 June 2026
- Required:
  - Registrations for 2023–2025 births
  - 5-year outcomes for 2017–2019 births with consent
- Outlier letters in August; responses due end of September

Dashboards ([SSQD](#))

- 13 March 2026- Q3 indicator (CLP00-CLP02)
- 19 June 2026- Q4 indicator (CLP00-CLP02, CLP05, CLP06, CLP09)

5. Data issues to address

Teams should review and update:

- Missing postcode and sex
- Missing LAHSAL
- Missing SMCP (No/Yes) and Simonart's (Not present/Yes)
- Missing syndrome coding (No/Yes)
- Incomplete dental and speech data
- Always complete VP surgery and fistula repair fields (No/Yes)
- Transfers - if transferring to another centre, do so well ahead of data extract data (>1 month)
- Consent not yet verified for 2017-2019 births

6. How to check and update data

Database access

- New access process introduced in February 2025
- Existing users can request access for colleagues
- Clinical Lead approves all requests

Live tables

Use the below to review missing data and consent rates:

- Consent tables (2017-2019 & 2023-2025 births)
- Outcomes table (2017-2019)
- Identifier table (NHS #, postcode, sex)

Imports

- Imports overwrite existing data- always export first
- Useful for:
  - 5-year outcomes
  - 5-year old index scores for retrospective complete BCLP cases
  - Psychology outcomes (later in 2026)

Timeliness and Reminders

- Submit data using imports at least 1 week prior to deadlines in case of errors
- Ensure transfers are completed early
- Prioritise verifying consent for 2017-2019 births

7. Quality improvement tools

CRANE provides:

- 12 step-by-step [guides](#)
- 6 database demonstration [videos](#)
- [Local Action Plan](#)
- [Supplementary tables](#) provided alongside the Annual Report show service-level data
- [Webinars](#) and CEN sessions

8. Information governance and actions

Information governance

- Use CRANE ID only when contacting CRANE
- Do not send any identifiable data by email or the website form
- CRANE follows UK GDPR, DPA 2018, and CAG/Section 251 governance

Actions for services

- Review identifiers and missing fields regularly
- Keep local forms aligned with the latest data dictionary
- Export before importing so existing data is not overwritten
- Process transfers promptly
- Use QI tools to maintain data completeness

9. Recommendations to units (based on 2025 data)

- Collaborate with maternity services to improve antenatal diagnosis rates (Cleft Net East)
- Improve diagnosis within 72 hours for CPO (Newcastle, Spires, Trent, North Thames)
- Improve antenatal CNS contact within 24 hours (West Midlands, South West, Newcastle, North Thames)
- Review low positive consent rates (Newcastle)
- Improve dmft submissions (North Thames, West Midlands, Trent, Evelina)
- Improve 5-year-old index submissions to have sufficient number for funnel plot (West Midland, Northern Ireland)
- Address psychology capacity issues (Northern Ireland, West Midlands, Liverpool, North Thames)

[The CRANE Database](#)- supporting high quality cleft care across the UK

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