Postcode to Health Authority Specification

UK Health Authorities

The organisation of the NHS is different in each of the four countries of the UK as follows.

English Health Geography

Health structure after 1 April 2015

On 1 April 2015 the 25 NHS area teams (NHSAT) merged and were renamed to form 13 regions (geography) (NHSRG). On 1 April 2016 the number of NHSRGs increased to 14 and in May 2017 they were renamed to NHS England (Region, Local Offices) (NHSRLO). At the same time, the four NHS commissioning regions (NHSCR) were renamed to NHS England (Regions) (NHSER).

Welsh Health Geography

The structure after 1 October 2009

The current structure of health administration in Wales came into effect on 1 October 2009. A total of 22 local health boards (LHB) merged to form seven, with each LHB covering one or more Welsh unitary authority (UA). These LHBs report to the three regional offices within the NHS Wales Department of the National Assembly.

Scottish Health Geography

Scotland has 14 health boards (HB), which form the upper tier of the Scottish health care system and report directly to the Scottish Government. The 34 community health partnerships (CHP) formed the lower tier of the Scottish health administration until they were abolished on 31 March 2015.

Northern Ireland Health Geography

The structure after 1 April 2009

The current structure of health administration in Northern Ireland came into effect on 1 April 2009. A single health and social care board (HSCB) replaced the four former health and social services boards (HSSB). The board focuses on commissioning, resource management, performance management and improvement. It identifies and meets the needs of the local population through its five local commissioning groups (LCG). LCGs are sub-committees of the HSCB.

Source: A Beginner's Guide to UK Geography 2017 v1.3, Office for National Statistics (http://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/datasets?q=Beginners%20Guide%20to%20UK%20Geographies&sort=name)

Data Files

This product consists of 3 comma separated text files with a header record.

Files **PCL-HTH-UK-CSV_1.csv** and **PCL-HTH-UK-CSV_2.csv** together represent all current live Postcodes in the UK with their associated Health Authority data. Each file contains half of the national file - approximately 870,000 Postcode records – which allows each half to be opened in Excel versions 2007 and later if required.

PCL-HTH-UK-CSV_1.csv contains all records for Postcode Areas AB to LN.

PCL-HTH-UK-CSV_2.csv contains all records for Postcode Areas LS to ZE.

File **PCL-HTH-UK-CSV-Retired.csv** contains Postcodes which have now been retired from the Postal system and therefore are no longer in circulation. This file is supplied free of charge to provide a comprehensive 'history' of Postcodes and the current Health Authority structure. It is recommended to use this data file in conjunction with the 'live' files above to achieve the maximum match rates for accurate analysis.

For database applications, both files can be loaded into your choice of database (e.g. Microsoft Access) and appended to create a single national data table of Postcodes.

Table Structure

Field	Description
Postcode	Full UK Postcode (eg UB7 0EB)
Postcode Sector	The Postcode Sector (eg UB7 0)
Postcode District	The Postcode District (eg UB7)
Postcode Area	The Postcode Area (eg UB)
Area Code	The codes for Health areas across the UK (see Health Areas below)
Area Name	The names for Health areas across the UK (see Health Areas below)
Region Code	The names for Health region (see Health Regions below)
Region Name	The names for Health region (see Health Regions below)
Country	The name of the Country the Postcode is located within
Introduced	Date the Postcode was introduced/ created
Retired	Date the Postcode was retired/ terminated

Health Areas

Area Code

The code for the CCG areas (England), LHBs (Wales), CHPs (Scotland) – now defunct, LCG (Northern Ireland) and PHD (Isle of Man; there are no equivalent areas in the Channel Islands (for which a pseudo code is included). The field will otherwise be blank for postcodes with no grid reference.

Area Name

The names for the above Area Codes.

Health Regions

Region Code

The health area code for the postcode: Former Strategic Health Authority (SHA)/ Local Health Board (LHB)/ Health Board (HB)/ Health Authority (HA)/ Health & Social Care Board (HSCB). SHAs were abolished in England in 2013 but the codes remain as a 'frozen' geography.

Region Name

The names for the above regions.

Introduced

Month and year of the most recent occurrence of the postcode's date of introduction in the form YYYYMM (year and month)

Retired

If present, the most recent occurrence of the postcode's date of termination in the form YYYYMM (year and month), otherwise: null indicates a 'live' postcode

Postcodes are terminated by Royal Mail for various reasons but most commonly it is due to the demolition/re-development of buildings or to postcode reorganisations.

Terminated postcodes are occasionally re-used by Royal Mail but not usually before an elapsed period of two or three years. In such circumstances, all terminated postcodes and their grid references are retained and a 'retired' date is added which provides a clear indication of a postcode's status.

Area data assigned to terminated postcodes are updated prior to each release of this data, so the directory contains current information linked to each record.