

Interpretation of funnel chart

Data is presented on a funnel chart to show where results are statistically significantly different from the mean and thus likely to be different from the rest of the population. Percentage of patients are displayed on the x axis and numbers of cases on the y axis, the 'funnel' is formed using lines which represent the upper and lower control limits, any data points which are above the upper control limits are known as 'outliers' i.e. the results are significantly higher than that of the population as a whole. It is these 'outliers' that require further investigation using the process below;

1. A board is identified as being an 'outlier' above the upper control limit in any one of the complication measures funnel charts.
2. ISD Recheck analysis for any errors or obvious issues with data.
3. If step 3 does not bring the result within the control limits, letter to clinical director of orthopaedic services (cc service manager, lead nurse) to explain the results.
4. Allow time for board to look at issue and ask for action plan within 45days of receipt of letter
5. Data published in annual report – if the issue and plans for improvement have been identified, this will be included in the annual report.