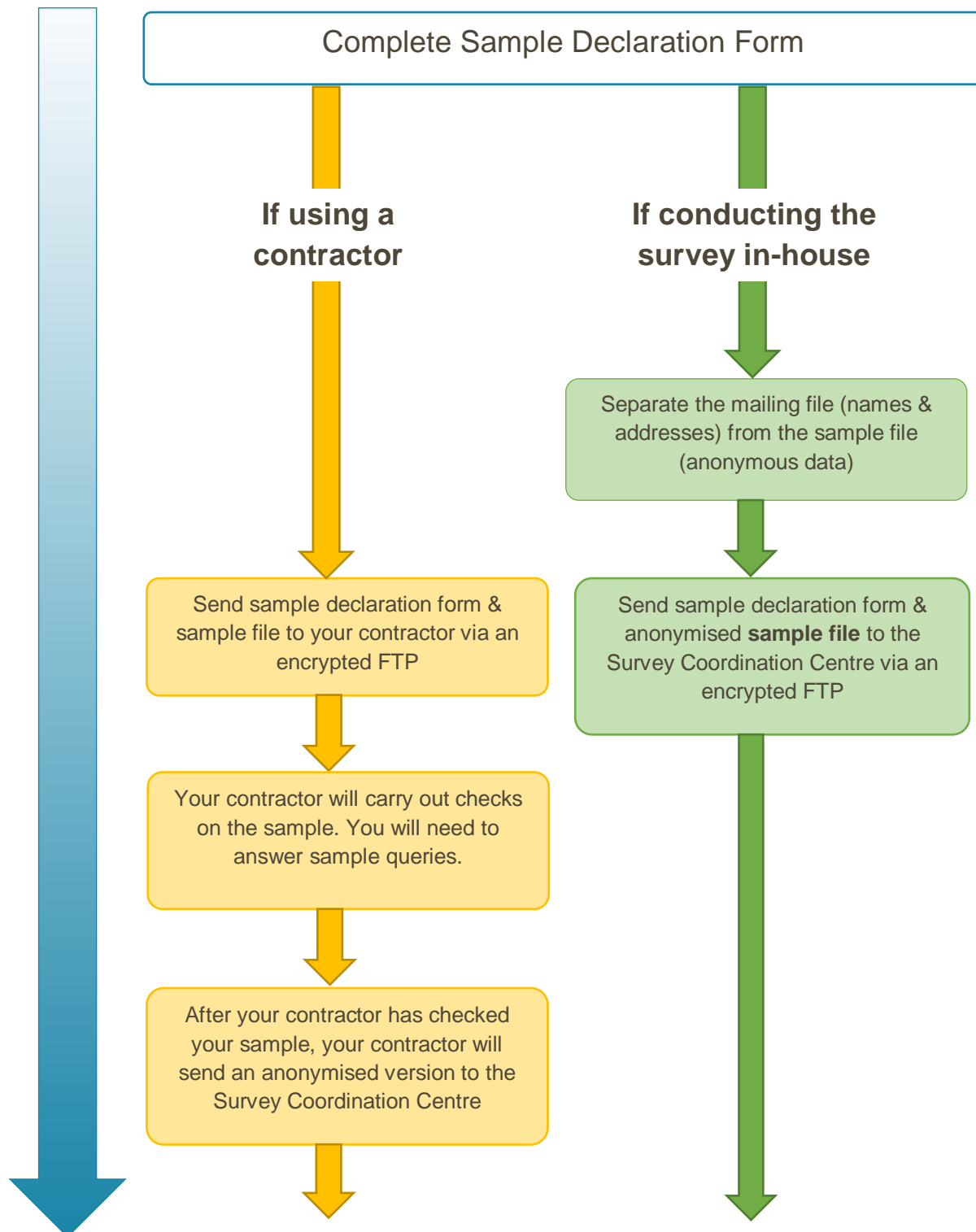


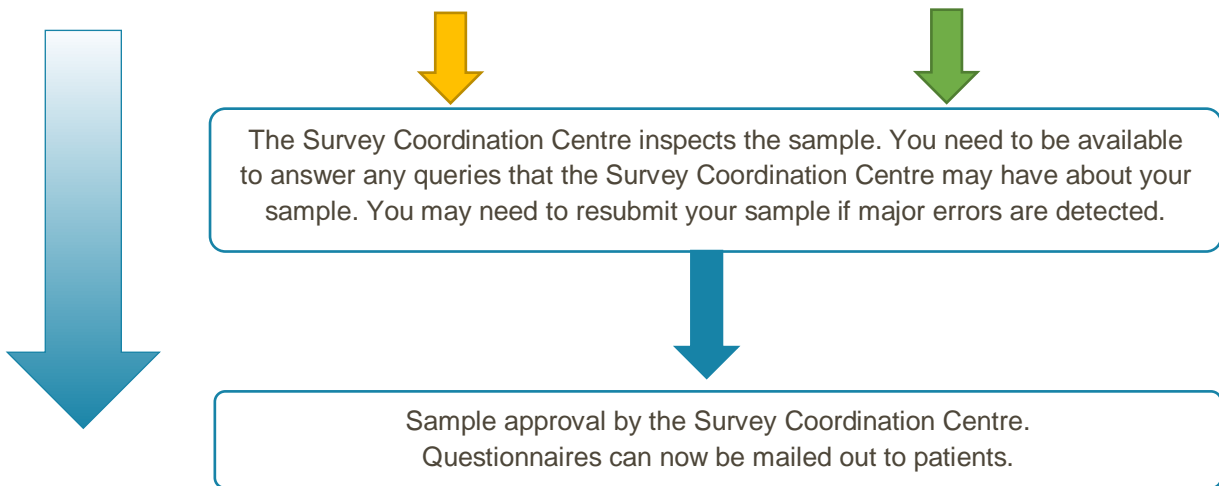
SUBMITTING YOUR SAMPLE

Last updated: 06 December 2017

Submitting your sample file

In order for the Survey Coordination Centre to make final quality control checks, an anonymised sample file must be submitted to the Survey Coordination Centre prior to the first mailing. The submission process is different depending on whether your trust is running the survey in-house or is using a contractor to run the survey on the trust's behalf.





Sample declaration form

The Sample Declaration Form is a requirement for the survey's Section 251 approval. Each trust needs to complete a sample declaration form when transferring the sample outside the trust's systems. The aim of this is to minimise the risk of any data breaches occurring and so it is worthwhile ensuring that this stage is followed correctly. The Sample Declaration Form needs to be completed (preferably electronically) and signed by:

- Person drawing the sample (this is usually someone from your data/IT team)
- Caldicott Guardian



Both contractors and the Survey Coordination Centre are under the obligation to report any breaches to the survey's [section 251 approval](#) to the CQC. Your Trust would also have to review whether the breach needs to be recorded against your Information Governance Toolkit as a Serious Incident Requiring Investigation (SIRI).

Sample inspection by the Survey Coordination Centre

We carry out sample inspections to make sure that every trust has drawn their sample in the same way. If you include patients who are ineligible, or if you exclude eligible patients, we call this a **major error**, and it could mean that CQC will be unable to use your results if this error is not discovered prior to the mailing of questionnaires. Sample queries will be returned via email to the trust within four working days of receiving the sample.

- Please ensure that your source data are complete when you draw your sample – if coding is not complete or all patients have not yet been entered into the system, your search criteria may not identify all eligible patients. This would be classed as a major error.
- Samples should be submitted to the Survey Coordination Centre as early as possible after the end of the sampling month/s (i.e. as soon as complete data are available). The later a sample is submitted, the higher the risk of entering the fieldwork late – this may lead to a low response rate.

Making the most of the fieldwork period

Certain demographic groups (e.g. younger patients and those from non-white ethnic backgrounds) have been shown to take longer to respond to patient surveys, so we strongly recommend that you submit your sample file well in advance of the start of fieldwork for your survey.



- Your first mailing should be mailed out as soon as possible after your sample has been approved by the Survey Coordination Centre - **no later than seven working days after**.
- A large time lag increases the likelihood of patients dying between receiving the sample file from DBS and the questionnaire being received, increasing the risk of distress to family members and complaints to your trust.



The keys to success...

- Allocate sufficient time to the individual who will produce your sample to allow them to generate it, dispatch it to DBS, and to respond to queries or corrections specified by the Survey Coordination Centre.
- Make sure your Caldicott Guardian will be available to sign off the transfer of the sample in the weeks following the sampling month.
- Check that your trust is registered with DBS and that the person who submits your sample to them understands their requirements.
- The printing of questionnaires and preparation of mailing packs can take place before the sample is signed off – this applies to both in-house trusts and contractors (on behalf of trusts working with them).
- **If you are carrying out the survey in-house:** Please ensure that the envelopes are left open so that you can check the correct label is applied to the correct questionnaire.