



Department of Health

Andy Williams
Chief Executive,
NHS Digital
1 Trevelyan Square, Boar Lane
Leeds
LS1 6AE

23 September 2016

Dear Andy

I am writing to provide a Direction to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC), also known as NHS Digital, to establish and operate a system for the collection and analysis of individual GP level data.

This Direction is given in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 254(1) and (6), 260(2)(d), 261(3), 274(2) and 304(9), (10) and (12) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012¹ and Regulation 32 of the National Institute for Health and Social Care Excellence (Constitution and Functions) and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (Functions) Regulations 2013².

The HSCIC is Directed to not publish information collected or produced by complying with this Direction, in accordance with section 260(2)(d). By virtue of section 261(3), The HSCIC is required to disseminate Information, which is prohibited from publishing under section 260(2) (d), only as specified in Appendix A.

The information to be collected is required in order to provide GPs with data for named patient lists. This will support one of the objectives in the Government's mandate to NHS England for 2016-17 by enabling GPs to review and improve the quality of care and outcomes for their named patients.

This Direction is to be known as the GP metrics Direction and come into force on 23 September 2016. The information collections are to be completed by August 2017. A new Direction will be issued for any future information collections necessary for this programme of work.

Under section 254 of the 2012 Act, the HSCIC is required to:

- Extract patient level primary care data via GPES for a set of 12 metrics³; see Appendix A
- Validate the extracted data; see Appendix A
- Link the extracted primary care data with secondary care data - noting only 1 metric of the 12 is being linked to secondary care data; see Appendix A

¹ 2012 c.7

² S.I. 2013/259

³ See Appendix A for further detail on the metrics and the extraction method

- Produce reports per general practice to include the metrics for all of the individual GPs who are registered as working at that general practice. The reports will follow the Information Commissioners Office (ICO's) Anonymisation Code of Practice whereby the data will be supplied in an aggregate form; see Appendix A

Please accept this letter as a Direction given under subsection (1) of section 254 of the 2012 Act to the HSCIC to exercise the functions in relation to the informatics support service for the collection and analysis of individual GP level data.

In line with patient rights contained within the NHS Constitution, the HSCIC will ensure it respects the rights of individual patients to request that their confidential information is not used beyond their own care and treatment and to have their objection considered. To support this patients are able to register an opt-out with their general practice to prevent their confidential personal information being released outside of the GP Practice (known as a Type 1 opt-out) where it is for purposes other than direct patient care.

The HSCIC has been Directed by the Department of Health to collect patient data for GP Metrics as outlined in Appendix A. This will be extracted using the General Practice Extraction Service (GPES) and the business rules for the extract will ensure Type 1 opt-outs are upheld.

In accordance with s254(5) the HSCIC has been consulted before this Direction has been given.

Yours sincerely



Jonathan Marron
Director, Community, Mental Health and 7 Day Services
Department of Health

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