

# Data Provision Notice

## Cloud Based Telephony

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## Background

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 (**the 2012 Act**) gives [NHS England](#) statutory powers, under section 259(1)(a), to require data from health or social care bodies, or organisations that provide publicly funded health or adult social care in England, where it has been directed to establish an information system by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

The data, as specified by NHS England in this published Data Provision Notice, is required to support a direction from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to NHS England. Therefore, organisations that are in scope of the Data Provision Notice are legally required, under section 259(5) of the 2012 Act, to provide the data in the form and manner specified below.

## Purpose

With the implementation of Modern General Practice Access there is an opportunity to generate and understand a more accurate picture of telephony demand on general practice.

A new Cloud Based Telephony data collection will be used for operational purposes nationally and shared with Integrated Care Boards (**ICBs**) at regular intervals to inform service improvement. This will provide insight to national and ICB teams regarding the level of demand on general practice.

NHS England requires practices to make this data available from October 2024.

The data will be considered alongside existing data collections, such as online consultations submissions and GP Appointments Data (**GPAD**), which are already being collected by NHS England.

NHS England has a statutory obligation to keep collections under review on an ongoing basis. NHS England will review the ongoing need for this collection on an ongoing annual basis as part of the GP contract consultations.

## Benefits

The collection of Cloud Based Telephony data is anticipated to provide the following benefits:

- Facilitate a better understanding of capacity/demand service planning at a local, regional and national level
- Provide relevant information to inform optimal service design
- Support commissioning of local services and inform service improvement
- Support the running of effective Operational Pressures Escalations Levels (**OPEL**) systems to monitor and manage the pressure on general practice services
- Remove the need for a manual collection of data at ICB level from multiple providers
- As there will be a single national data source, the data will be standardised and therefore, there will be reduced variation in the data and greater reliability.

# Legal basis for collection, analysis, publication and dissemination

## Collection and Analysis

NHS England has been directed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care under section 254 of the 2012 Act to establish and operate a system for the collection and analysis of the information specified for this service: Cloud-Based Telephony. The [General Practice Contract Data Collections Directions 2017 and accompanying requirements specification](#) are published on the NHS England website.

This information is required by NHS England under section 259(1)(a) of the 2012 Act.

In line with section 259(5) of the 2012 Act, all organisations in scope, in England, must comply with the requirement and provide information to NHS England in the form, manner and period specified in this Data Provision Notice.

This Data Provision Notice is issued in accordance with the procedure published as part of an NHS England duty under section 259(8) of the 2012 Act.

## Publication

NHS England may publish data by virtue of s260(1), taking into account of s260(2) and s260(3) of the 2012 Act.

Where, pursuant to section 260(1) of the 2012 Act, NHS England publishes information obtained by complying with the directions, it will do so in the form and manner agreed with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, that being publication of anonymous statistical data (with small numbers suppressed). Any information that is published will be published in accordance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) and will be subject to data quality checks being met and further engagement with the profession.

## Dissemination

NHS England will disseminate, under section 261(1) of the 2012 Act, the information it has obtained by complying with the Directions to ICBs where it would be lawful for NHS England to do so. NHS England will share data with ICBs in aggregate form.

## Persons consulted

Following receipt of a direction to establish a system to collect Cloud-Based Telephony data, NHS England has, as required under section 258 of the 2012 Act, consulted with the following persons:

- Department of Health and Social Care (**DHSC**), as directing organisation
- British Medical Association (**BMA**)
- Cloud Based Telephony system suppliers

## Scope of the collection

Under section 259(1)(a) of the 2012 Act, this Data Provision Notice is served in accordance with the procedure published as part of the NHS England duty under section 259(8) on the following persons:

- General practices in England

Under section 259(5) of the 2012 Act the organisation types specified above must comply with the Form, Manner and Period requirements below.

The national data opt-out and type 1 opt-out do not apply to the collection of this data from general practices as the data is not considered confidential patient information.

## Form of the collection

NHS England requires the following metrics be reportable from GP systems call history:

1. call volumes
2. call abandoned
3. call times to answer (time taken for a patient to reach their required destination / speak to staff)
4. missed call volumes
5. time period abandoned
6. call backs requested
7. call backs made
8. call length times
9. total number of inbound calls that are answered

Where possible, cloud based telephony suppliers will provide NHS England with aggregate data as this is considered sufficient to enable NHS England to provide better insight into patient demand and access trends. However, it is recognised that it may not be possible, or it may be too difficult, for a proportion of cloud based telephony suppliers to provide the data in aggregate form, and therefore NHS England will accept the provision of anonymous, row-level data in order to generate the metrics outlined above. Row-level data will be deleted by NHS England once the metrics have been successfully generated to ensure it does not retain the data for longer than is considered necessary for the purposes for which the data is supplied.

The [aggregate and row-level data specifications](#), which practices must provide the data in accordance with, are published on the NHS England website.

## Manner of the collection

General practices are sent an invitation to participate via CQRS. This invitation must be accepted as there is a direction in place for this data collection and it is a legal requirement for general practices to provide this data under section 259(1)(a) of the 2012 Act. All general

practices in England are therefore mandated to comply with this invitation and approve the collection.

A list of general practices which have confirmed their participation in the data collection is provided to system suppliers on a monthly basis (last week of the month). System suppliers will then extract the required data from only those general practices that have accepted the invitation to participate in the collection. NHS England cannot collect information for any general practice which has not accepted the invitation to participate.

Data will be collected in aggregate or anonymous, row-level format (where suppliers unable to provide the data in aggregate form) via a secure data transfer between cloud-based telephony suppliers and NHS England, such as cloud to cloud, Message Exchange for Social Care and Health (**MESH**) or via an API.

Data will be collected on a monthly basis. Data should be provided between the 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> of each month and should pertain to the previous month's activity.

## Period of the collection

The data is collected on a monthly basis, with the first extract taking place in October 2024. The data will cover the period from 1 October 2024 onwards.

The [GP live collections timetable](#) provides further details of when this data collection will take place. Please note that this timetable is a live document and may be edited to reflect a change to the collection schedule; users are advised to check this regularly for updates.

## Data quality

NHS England performs data quality checks on all data collections that are received.

Data quality will be checked against the standard six data quality characteristics, which are: coverage, completeness, validity, default, integrity, and timeliness.

NHS England works with the Cloud Based Telephony system suppliers, both during their development activities and after submission of the data to ensure they understand the requirements and that the data reported is as accurate as possible.

This includes:

- developing a common understanding of the definitions and semantics of the data items within the data set
- developing a common understanding of data quality issues, their root causes and possible fixes
- understanding the end to end process of each supplier in completing their returns
- understanding the particular challenges faced by each system supplier in meeting requirements and working to agree suitable solutions to these
- escalation of these challenges as appropriate
- supporting system suppliers as they implement reporting fixes (this will include agreeing completion targets and reporting progress to NHS England) and tracking progress

- supporting the development of robust data quality checking and assurance systems
- understanding the meaning of the data within the context of the environment and system that the system suppliers are providing.

## Burden of the collection

### Steps taken by NHS England to minimise the burden of collection

NHS England has a statutory duty under section 253(2) of the 2012 Act to seek to minimise the burden it imposes on others. In seeking to meet these obligations in relation to this collection, NHS England has:

- sought to establish and operate a national data collection rather than collecting the data manually at ICB level from multiple providers
- provided suitable submission methods to minimise the burden on data collection as well as to ensure data consistency and quality, and support organisations where they can in establishing processes to make those submissions
- required that Advanced Telephony system providers support the practices with the provision of the call level data meaning that practices do not face additional administrative burden.

In addition, in support of its obligation under section 265(3) of the 2012 Act, NHS England has an assessment process to validate and challenge the level of burden incurred through introducing new information standards, collections and extractions.

This process is carried out by the [Data Standards Assurance Service \(DSAS\)](#) which assures burden assessment evidence as part of the overarching Data Alliance Partnership Board ([DAPB](#)) approval process. The DAPB, acting under authority of the Secretary of State, oversees the assurance, approval and publication of information standards and data collections for the health and social care system in England.

At the time of publishing this Data Provision Notice, the assessment process being undertaken by DSAS is ongoing. Once the process has been completed, this Data Provision Notice will be updated.