



Sarah Wilkinson
Chief Executive
NHS Digital
1 Trevelyan Square
Boar Lane
Leeds LS1 6AE

16 October 2019

Dear Sarah,

I am writing on behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care ('the Secretary of State') to direct the Health and Social Care Information Centre, known as and referred to in this Direction as NHS Digital, to establish and operate an information system for the collection and analysis of information on the NHS Health Check programme.

The NHS Health Check programme aims to improve the vascular and circulatory health of adults aged 40 to 74 years in England. Information is collected on persons offered a health check which is used to calculate their risk of developing certain preventable illnesses and to offer medical advice on how to reduce this risk.

This Direction replaces the Direction for the NHS Health Check for Adults Aged 40-74 Years Data Extraction that was in effect from 17 October 2017 and which is revoked with effect from 16 October 2019.

The purpose of this Direction is to enable NHS Digital to collect from General Practices in England demographic, medical and administrative information on persons offered an NHS Health Check. This information will be provided to Public Health England (PHE) to analyse and publish in a range of forms and will be published by NHS Digital as National Statistics to support the commissioning and monitoring of NHS Health Check and related health and care services.

PHE is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care. It fulfils the Secretary of State's statutory duties to protect health and address health inequalities, and executes the Secretary of State's power to promote the health and wellbeing of the nation. PHE's annual remit letter from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health and Primary Care sets out its responsibility to improve the public's health and reduce health inequalities by supporting sustainable health and care services. This includes setting national standards and monitoring access to and follow up of the NHS Health Check programme.

This Direction is given to NHS Digital in exercise of the powers of the Secretary of State conferred by sections 254(1) and (6), 260(4)(a), 262(1), 2(a) and (7), 304(9), (10) and (11), and with reference to section 304(12)(a)(v) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 ('the Act').

In accordance with section 254(2)(b) of the Act, the Secretary of State considers it to be in the interests of the health service in England for this Direction to be given.

This Direction is to be known as the **NHS Health Check General Practice Data Extraction Direction (No. 2)** and comes into force on 16 October 2019.

Collection and analysis

Under section 254 of the Act, NHS Digital is directed to:

- Collect and analyse confidential patient information¹, as specified in the NHS Health Check Business Rules², which may be revised as agreed by Public Health England and NHS Digital from time to time, for persons in the following four groups:
 - a) persons aged 40-74 years invited to an NHS Health Check
 - b) persons aged 40-74 years who either commenced, completed or did not attend or declined an NHS Health Check
 - c) persons aged 40-74 years recorded as inappropriate for an NHS Health Check
 - d) persons aged 18-39 years invited to and/or completing an NHS Health Check.
- Collect this information from General Practices in England according to the schedule agreed with Public Health England.
- Link this information to other information controlled by NHS Digital, such as hospital activity and civil registrations information, as jointly agreed, and which may be revised from time to time, by Public Health England and NHS Digital.

Publication and dissemination

In accordance with section 260(4)(a) of the Act, NHS Digital is directed to publish the information obtained by complying with this Direction as National Statistics for the NHS Health Check programme in a form, manner and timing as agreed with Public Health England and in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Statistics³.

Under section 262(1) and (7) of the Act, NHS Digital is directed to disseminate the information obtained by complying with this Direction to Public Health England. The information disseminated to Public Health England will be anonymised in accordance with

¹ Confidential patient information in this Direction has the same meaning as in section 251(11) of the National Health Service Act 2006.

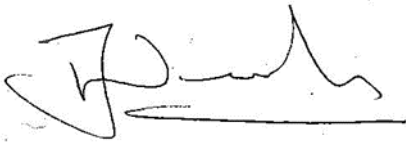
² The NHS Health Check Business Rules are published at <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/general-practice-gp-collections/service-information/nhs-health-checks-business-rules>

³ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/the-code/>

the Information Commissioner's Office Anonymisation Code of Practice⁴. Public Health England will analyse this information and publish the results of these analyses in a range of forms to support the commissioning and monitoring of NHS Health Check and related health and care services.

In accordance with section 254(5) of the Act, NHS Digital has been consulted before this Direction has been given.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Newton', written over a horizontal line.

Professor John Newton
Director of Health Improvement

⁴ <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1061/anonymisation-code.pdf>