



Department of Health & Social Care

Department of Health and Social
Care
39 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0EU

Sir James Mackey
Chief Executive
NHS England

3rd September 2025

Dear Sir James,

1. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Health and Care Research Pilot Directions 2025**

- 1.1 I am writing on behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (**the Secretary of State**) to give Directions to **NHS England**.
- 1.2 These Directions are given in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 254(1), 260(2)(d), 261(3) and 304(9), (10) and (12) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012¹ (**the 2012 Act**), and sections 13ZC, 272(7) and (8) of the National Health Service Act 2006² (**the 2006 Act**).
- 1.3 These Directions are to be known as the **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Health and Care Research Pilot Directions 2025** and come into force on the date after the day on which they are signed.

2. **Requirement for these Directions**

- 2.1 In accordance with section 254(2)(a) of the 2012 Act, the Secretary of State considers that the information which could be obtained by complying with these Directions is information which it is necessary or expedient for the Secretary of State to have in relation to the exercise by the Secretary of State of his functions in connection with the provision of health services or of adult social care in England.

¹ 2012 c.7 (the 2012 Act). Relevant amendments were made by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (Transfer of Functions, Abolition and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2023 (S.I. 2023/98).

² Section 13ZC was inserted by section 45 of the Health and Care Act 2022 (c.31).

- 2.2 In accordance with section 254(2)(b) of the 2012 Act, the Secretary of State also considers that it is in the interests of the health service in England or of the recipients or providers of adult social care in England for these Directions to be given.
- 2.3 In accordance with section 254(5) of the 2012 Act, the Secretary of State has consulted NHS England before giving these Directions.
- 2.4 In accordance with section 13ZC(5) of the 2006 Act, the Secretary of State considers these Directions to be in the public interest.

3. **Priorities, Policies and Non-Statutory Guidance**

In exercising functions under these Directions, NHS England must have regard to such priorities, policies and non-statutory guidance³ of the Secretary of State as the Secretary of State may notify in writing from time to time to NHS England.

4. **Purpose**

4.1 The purpose of these Directions (**the Purpose**) is to require NHS England to establish an information system for the collection and analysis of data from participating, publicly funded organisations providing health or social care in England for purposes of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Health and Care Research Pilot (**EDI Pilot**).

4.2 The EDI Pilot is established for purposes of identifying variation in participation in health and care research, based on demographics, to assess and improve equality, diversity and inclusion in such research. NHS England will provide results of its analysis in the form of reports and dashboards, which will inform the Department of Health and Social Care's (**DHSC**) strategy and policy decisions with the support of the National Institute for Health and Care Research (**NIHR**), aligned with the "[Best Research for Best Health: The Next Chapter](#)" and as set out in the [NIHR Research Inclusion Strategy 2022-2027](#).

5. **Establishing and operating information systems**

- 5.1 The Secretary of State directs NHS England to establish and operate a system for the collection and analysis of the information described in the Requirements Specification for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Health and Care Research Pilot Directions 2025 version 1 (as published with these Directions), as updated periodically by the Secretary of State in consultation with NHS England (**the Requirements Specification**).
- 5.2 The system to be established and operated is to be known as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Health and Care Research Pilot Directions' Information System.

³In addition, NHS England has a duty to have regard to [statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 274A of the 2012 Act: NHS England's protection of patient data, 23 May 2023](#), as the same may be updated from time to time.

5.3 The Secretary of State directs NHS England to analyse the information which NHS England obtains by complying with these Directions (**the Information**), as may be required by the Secretary of State or as NHS England considers necessary to achieve the Purpose.

5.4 Such analysis includes:

5.4.1 analysis by reference or linkage to any other information described in the Requirements Specification;

5.4.2 analysis for data quality purposes, including undertaking comparison and consistency analysis of the same or similar information obtained by complying with other directions under section 254 of the 2012 Act;

5.4.3 any other analysis of the Information as NHS England considers appropriate to maintain data quality, accuracy and consistency in relation to the Information.

5.5 In exercising functions under these Directions, NHS England must act in accordance with the Requirements Specification and generally in such a way as to achieve the Purpose.

6. Service Levels etc

In exercising functions under these Directions, NHS England must act in accordance with the service levels, support and monitoring requirements, and the reporting and governance requirements notified by the Secretary of State in writing to NHS England as at the date these Directions come into force, or as those requirements are amended and notified by an authorised officer of DHSC on behalf of the Secretary of State in writing to NHS England from time to time.

7. Publication

For the purposes of section 260(1) and (2)(d) of the 2012 Act, certain of the Information might be set out in the Requirements Specification as not for publication (**Non-Published Data**) under section 260(2)(d) of the 2012 Act (and must not be published)⁴.

8. Dissemination

Despite the prohibition on publication set out in paragraph 7, the Secretary of State directs NHS England to exercise its power to disseminate the Non-Published Data to DHSC and NIHR.⁵

⁴ Such information is specified as information falling within section 260(2)(d) and the prohibition in section 260(1) on publishing information accordingly applies to it.

⁵ See section 261(3) of the 2012 Act as regards NHS England's power to disseminate information which NHS England is prohibited from publishing only by virtue of these Directions.

9. Fees and Accounts

NHS England must keep proper accounts, and proper records in relation to the accounts, in connection with these Directions.

10. Duration

These Directions cease to have effect on 1st March 2027 or such other date, if any, as the Secretary of State notifies to NHS England by a further direction.

11. Review of these Directions

These Directions will be reviewed from time to time. Any amendments to the Directions or the Requirements Specification will only be made after consultation with NHS England.

Yours sincerely



Louise Greenrod

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

Date signed: 3rd September 2025