



Department
of Health &
Social Care

39 Victoria Street
London
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Sarah Wilkinson
Chief Executive
NHS Digital
1 Trevelyan Square
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Leeds
LS1 6AE

Date: 09/07/18

Dear Sarah

I am writing on behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to provide a Direction to the Health and Social Care Information Centre, now known and hereafter referred to as NHS Digital, to establish and operate a system for the collection of patient identifiable primary care prescribing and dispensing data from the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) for the purposes of analysis and linkage to Hospital Episode Statistical data (HES).

This Direction is given in exercise of the powers conferred on the Secretary of State by sections 254(1) and (6), 260(1) and (4), 261(1) and 304(9), (10) and (12) 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 that this information is necessary or expedient to have in relation to his functions in connection with the provision of health services in England.

The Direction is to be known as the **Medication Safety Data Collection and Analysis Direction (No 2) 2018** and comes into effect on 9 July 2018.

Purpose

This Direction will enable NHS Digital to support a programme of medication safety surveillance to drive change in medication safety, measure improvement and contribute to meeting the WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge “Medication without Harm”. This work is part of the programme of work on patient safety which is one of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care’s key priorities.

The key objectives of the data collection and analysis are:

- to measure the rate of possible instances of avoidable harm caused by medication, against a defined set of analyses
- To be able to track if initiatives to improve medication safety at the national level have resulted in reduced instances of avoidable harm over time.

Direction

In accordance with section 260(4), NHS Digital must publish anonymised information through linking data for a set of analyses to measure the extent and rate of possible instances of avoidable harm which may be attributable to prescribed medication unless instructed otherwise by the Department of Health and Social Care. In accordance with section 261, NHS Digital may use its dissemination powers to make this information available to the Department of Health and Social Care and other appropriate bodies.

The Direction will cover the collection of patient identifiable primary care prescribing and dispensing data routinely collected by NHSBSA in the course of the prescription reimbursement processes to support the analyses as specified by the Department of Health and Social Care on an agreed subset of prescribed items.

For each of these subsets, under 254(1) NHS Digital is directed to collect data items as set out in Annex 1, in relation to the analyses specified by the Department of Health and Social Care.

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

Please accept this letter as a Direction given under section 254(1) of the Act to NHS Digital to collect and analyse patient identifiable data from the NHS Business Services Authority and publish information in an anonymised form for the purposes outlined above.

This Direction replaces the Medication Safety Data Collection and Analysis Direction 2017 issued on 21 November 2018.

Yours sincerely



William Vineall
Director, Acute Care and Quality Policy

Annex 1

List of data items to be collected against agreed analyses

Data Items	Data Description
Drug Name	Drug Name
Drug Strength	Drug Strength
Drug formulation	Drug formulation
Drug Quantity	Drug Quantity Dispensed
Drug Code/classifier	ePACT BNF Code
Month and year	Date (month and year) prescription submitted to BSA for payment
GP Practice (Cost Centre) Code	Unique GP Practice Code
NHS No	Unique patient identifier
DOB	Patient Date of Birth
Patient Age	Age of patient
Patient Gender	Gender of patient