



## Department of Health & Social Care

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

Date 08/11/2019

Dear Sarah,

### **Medicines Spend and Use Data – Discovery Directions 2019**

I am writing to provide Directions to the Health and Social Care Information Centre, known as and hereafter referred to in these Directions as **NHS Digital**.

These Directions are given in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 254(1) and (6), 260(2)(d), 261(2)(e), 262(5), 274(1)(d) and (2) and 304(9), (10) and (12) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012<sup>1</sup> (**the Act**) and Regulation 32 of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Constitution and Functions) and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (Functions) Regulations 2013<sup>2</sup> (**the Regulations**).

These Directions are to be known as the **Medicines Spend and Use Data – Discovery Directions 2019** and come into effect on 08/11/2019. In exercising the functions described in these Directions, NHS Digital must have regard to such priorities, policies, advice or guidance of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care as the Secretary of State may notify in writing from time to time to NHS Digital.

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

Pursuant to sections 254(1) and 254(6) of the Act, NHS Digital is directed to establish and operate an information system for the collection and analysis of medicines spend and use data. This information system will be known as the **Medicines Spend and Use Information System**.

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<sup>1</sup> 2012 c.7

<sup>2</sup> S.I. 2013/259

## Purpose

National health and care organisations require access to good quality, national data, about NHS medicine spend and use, in order to:

- Improve patient care and outcomes
- understand the medicines market
- manage medicines spend.

The collection and analysis of medicines data, will enable information to be obtained about the spend and usage of medicines, by NHS providers commonly referred to as secondary care, and may include but may not be limited to:

- NHS acute providers (providing largely hospital-based services)
- NHS community providers (providing services such as district nursing, health visiting)
- NHS mental health providers
- NHS specialist providers (providing services such as specialist eyecare or cancer treatment)
- NHS ambulance services
- Organisations commissioned by the NHS to provide NHS services, including medicines supply and medicines stock control services.

Discovery work is required to collect and analyse data from NHS providers who have agreed to participate, to work towards an eventual common specification or standard, for data collection.

## The Medicines Spend and Use Information System

Pursuant to section 254(1) and (6) of the Act, NHS Digital is directed to collect and analyse medicines spend and use data and to carry out these activities in accordance with **Specification for Medicines Spend and Use Data – Discovery Directions 2019** (the Specification) issued with these Directions. The Specification may be reviewed, added to and updated periodically (within the confines of the scope set out in these Directions) in accordance with the Change Control process set out in the Specification.

NHS Digital will work in partnership with participating NHS providers and IT system suppliers, to collect data about all medicines purchased and issued by the aforementioned NHS providers.

## Publication

In accordance with section 260(2)(d) of the Act, NHS Digital is directed not to publish information obtained by complying with these Directions, due to their discovery nature.

## Dissemination

In accordance with section 261(2)(e) of the Act, NHS Digital may exercise the power under section 261(1) and disseminate the information obtained in such form and manner and at such times as it considers appropriate.

In accordance with section 262(5) of the Act, any information which has the potential to prejudice commercial interest as referred to in the Dissemination/Sharing section of the Specification, may not be disseminated without express permission from the original data provider.

### **Systems Delivery Function**

Pursuant to section 274(1)(d) and (2) of the Act and regulation 32(1) of the Regulations, NHS Digital is further directed to exercise the following additional systems delivery functions of the Secretary of State:

- to develop and operate such IT applications, IT infrastructure and IT systems as would assist NHS Digital to provide the Medicines Spend and Use Information System.

In accordance with regulation 32(2)(a) of the Regulations, the Secretary of State may make payments to NHS Digital for things done in the exercise of the systems delivery functions described in these Directions.

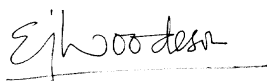
In accordance with section 254(5) of the Act, NHS Digital has been consulted before these Directions have been given.

With effect from 08/11/2019, the **Accelerated Access to Medicines Directions 2018** issued on 23 March 2018 are withdrawn.

### **Review of these Directions**

These Directions will be reviewed before the end of March 2021 with DHSC and may be revoked if the purpose has been met. This review will include consultation with NHS Digital as required by section 254(5) of the Act.

Yours sincerely



Liz Woodeson

Director, Medicines and Pharmacy