

# REPORT OF A BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STATISTICS

## 1. Core Information [\[guidance\]](#)

<b>Title and link to statistical output</b>	Local Authority Health Profiles <a href="https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles">https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles</a>
<b>Name of producer organisation</b>	Public Health England
<b>Name and contact details of person dealing with report</b>	Natasha Roberts Natasha.roberts@phe.gov.uk
<b>Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)</b>	
<b>Date of breach report</b>	24/10/2019

## 2. Circumstances of breach [\[guidance\]](#)

<b>Relevant principle(s) and practice(s)</b>	Wrongful early release (Principle T3, Practices T3.6) Statistics published after 9.30am (Principle T3, Practice T3.6)
<b>Date of occurrence of breach</b>	22/10/2019
<p>There were two issues with the publication</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The landing page to access the downloads of the local authority health profiles was published an hour early at 8.30am on 22 October 2019.</li> <li>2. Users were unable to access the profiles as the functionality that enables users to download the profiles did not work.</li> </ol>	

## 3. Impact of the breach [\[guidance\]](#)

<p>The statistics contained within the Local Authority Health Profiles (LAHPs) are already in the public domain. The indicators were available online from the 1<sup>st</sup> October in the associated Fingertips profile. The LAHPs collate this data into a report that can be printed and shared in a way that is more meaningful to a non-technical audience and were scheduled for publication on 22 October.</p> <p>The Fingertips team sent an email to the Health Profiles team at 8.32 to notify that the profiles had been made available on the Fingertips website. This was an hour before the scheduled release. There was no impact from the early release as, post release testing identified that there was an issue with the downloads, which meant that users were unable to access the LAHPs.</p> <p>There are two ways a user can download the profiles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Via the 'find your area profile' on the front page of the Fingertips tool</li> <li>2. Via the download tab within the data profile.</li> </ol> <p>Four messages were received from users of the output to notify us about an issue with the download and to request a copy of their area profile.</p>
--

Users were able to download the LAHPs from 12.30 on 23 October, via the download tab within the data tool. Issues with 'find your area profile' were not fixed until 24 October, when full functionality was restored.

#### 4. Corrective actions (taken or planned) to prevent re-occurrence[\[guidance\]](#)

*Short term actions implemented on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October (day of release):*

- Users were notified via a message on the 'profiles' website were the LAHPs should have been published(<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles>) on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October. The message acknowledged the issue and advised how to get access to the profile reports via email. In response to the notification 16 local authority areas requested profiles.
- The PHE local knowledge and intelligence service (LKIS) was informed and copies of the profile reports were shared with the 9 LKIS teams to enable distribution.
- A message was posted to PHE's national Health intelligence KHUB site to inform potential users of the profiles about the issue.
- Emails were sent out to local networks by the PHE local knowledge and intelligence services to inform colleagues of the issue and offer profiles upon request.
- The message on the 'profiles' website was updated on 23<sup>rd</sup> October notifying that the profiles could be downloaded via the download tab within the data tool. There were still issues with 'Find your profile' functionality on the front page of the tool. This functionality was restored on 24<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **Next steps**

The output of the LAHPs changed from pdf format to HTML format. The development team were aware of the change and acknowledged that this would require coding changes to the existing functionality. The production team should have followed up with the development team to check that the changes had happened. The production team should have tested access to the profiles via the test site and reported any issues to the development team. The production team and the Fingertips development team have met to discuss this and improve communications for the future.

We will work to improve communication between the production team and the Fingertips development team including:

- At the start of each project arrange a meeting to discuss any significant changes.
- During this meeting, agree responsibilities, identify and agree a timeline, identify any potential risks and mitigate against them.
- Project management tools (JIRA/Confluence) will be used to monitor tasks.

A senior member of staff will ensure that pre-release testing happens routinely as part of any future release.

Agree a publication date with the development team to ensure that a developer is available on the day of release to make changes if the functionality fails. Agree and

assess the risks if on the day of release the developer is no-longer available and agree a plan of action. Where possible the publication date should not fall outside of the routine monthly Fingertips release.

Ensure the all involved in an official statistics publication understand the importance of the 9.30 scheduled release time and the potential consequences of publishing early.