

REPORT OF A BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STATISTICS

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

Title and link to statistical output	Emergency Department (ED) attendance following Pathways NHS111 calls, England, 2018 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/emergency-department-ed-attendance-following-pathways-nhs111-calls-england-2018
Name of producer organisation	NHS Digital
Name and contact details of person dealing with report	Sunita Wilkhu, NHS Digital sunita.wilkhu1@nhs.net Jane Tocher NHS Digital jane.tocher@nhs.net
Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)	N/A
Date of breach report	05Feb2020

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

Relevant principle(s) and practice(s)	Accidental or wrongful early release (Practices T3.3, T3.4)
Date of occurrence of breach	05Feb2020
<p>The Emergency Department (ED) attendance following Pathways NHS111 calls, England 2018 publication was sent out for pre-release at 09:30 on the 5th February 2020.</p> <p>The restrictions around sharing were clearly marked on all material that had been shared with people on the pre-release list.</p> <p>A recipient on the pre-release access list for NHS England forwarded the publication to two other recipients who were not on the pre-release access list. The colleague in question, working in haste, made an error about who was on the pre-release access list, and then further failed to check the list to confirm this, before forwarding the email.</p>	

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

<p>The recipient on the pre-release list in forwarding the material to two other recipients who were not on the pre-release access list had also retained the Statistical Governance team mailbox address on the same mail. Separately, and a short time later, the NHS England briefing co-ordinator also copied the Statistical Governance team into an email to all the recipients on the pre-release access list requesting them not to share the data with people who were not on the list.</p> <p>Therefore, Statistical Governance were aware of the breach within approximately 30 mins of the publication being wrongfully shared with the two recipients who were not on the pre-release list.</p> <p>The briefing coordinator for the publication at NHS England was instructed to contact the people who had received the publication in error and request them to delete the data immediately. The briefing co-ordinator confirmed that the email with the data was deleted and not shared by the people who had received the publication in error.</p>
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Given the fact that the publication was shared with only two people internally within NHS England and the breach was identified quickly, we believe that this is a low impact breach.

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

Statistical Governance instructed the briefing coordinator for the publication at NHS England to contact the people who had received the publication in error and request them to delete the data immediately.

The NHS England briefing co-ordinator for the publication has spoken to their NHS England colleague responsible for the breach to ensure that they have a complete understanding of the rules of pre-release access, the importance of adhering to them and the potential impact of not doing so. NHS England has also agreed to undertake training to the wider team and not just the individual in question to highlight the issue and refreshing all those responsible for similar work on the required protocols and potential impact of not adhering to them.

Statistical Governance reported the incident to the Head of Profession for Statistics immediately.