

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

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

<b>Title and link to statistical output</b>	2018 Cancer incidence, survival, mortality and prevalence data  <a href="http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/nicr/CancerInformation/official-statistics">http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/nicr/CancerInformation/official-statistics</a>
<b>Name of producer organisation</b>	Northern Ireland Cancer Registry (NICR) – Queen’s University Belfast (QUB)
<b>Name and contact details of person dealing with report</b>	Dr David Donnelly <a href="mailto:david.donnelly@qub.ac.uk">david.donnelly@qub.ac.uk</a>
<b>Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)</b>	
<b>Date of breach report</b>	02/04/2020

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

<b>Relevant principle(s) and practice(s)</b>	Practice T3.6 - statistics not released at the scheduled time of 09:30am (early or delayed publication)
<b>Date of occurrence of breach</b>	02/04/2020
Release of official statistics online was delayed by approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. The delay was caused by a minor technical issue in the Queens University, Belfast’s (QUB) Content Management System (CMS) holding server, where updates to web sites are made. The server failed to automatically transfer the updated NICR website to the CMS live server at the appropriate time (i.e. 9.30 am).	

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

None – no negative consequences (e.g. contact from customers) have been reported thus far.
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## 4. Corrective actions (taken or planned) to prevent re-occurrence [\[guidance\]](#)

<p><i>Describe the short-term actions made to redress the situation and the longer term changes to procedures etc</i></p> <p>Information Technology (IT) staff in NICR contacted the CMS team via the QUB IT Support HUB and logged a call. A CMS member of staff contacted the NICR Officer and got more detailed information about the problem. The CMS staff member modified the Official Statistics section of the NICR website in order to solve the technical issues and then manually transferred all relevant files from the holding server to the live server.</p> <p>The CMS staff member contacted the NICR IT officer and informed him of the website fix. All the relevant links in the Official Statistics section of the NICR site were checked and the website was posted online. Confirmation that the update was visible online was made at approximately 10.50am.</p> <p>Further communication with the CMS team was initiated after the problem was rectified in order to identify the exact source of the problem. Specifically, the difficulties occurred due to the official statistics pages of the website having a section of Java code missing, with the</p>
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missing code preventing the website from being migrated from the holding server to the live server.

A contributing factor to the breach was also the fact that the CMS team were working from home due to coronavirus restrictions. In previous years CMS staff would have manually migrated the Official Statistics web pages to the live server at 9.30am after being requested to do so by NICR staff. However, this year, while a request had been made in advance to automatically upload the data at 9.30am (due to remote working by staff), once the upload error occurred direct contact could not be made with the CMS team via phone as a result of staff working from home. A call had to be logged through QUB IT support resulting in a longer than usual delay in getting the CMS team to fix the error and manually migrate the Official Statistics web pages to the live server.

Changes in procedure to be made for future releases:

The technical issues with the web page have now been rectified. These changes include a redesign of the web page which included the Java script to remove the need for this additional piece of code. This modification will be retained to ensure that errors in the upload of web pages for this reason do not arise again in the future. In addition, CMS staff should be more readily available at the time of release to deal with any upload issues.

Further to the actions described above, NICR intends to review the content and structure of its web site to ensure that it is more closely integrated with the general QUB web site, making it easier to make updates to the content and reduce the risk of errors occurring during this process.