

REPORT OF A BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STATISTICS



1. Core Information

Title and link to statistical outputs	Diagnostics Waiting Times and Activity Accident & emergency attendances and emergency admissions Ambulance Quality Indicators Bed Availability and Occupancy Delayed Transfers of Care Hospital Activity Mixed Sex Accommodation Referral to Treatment Waiting Times Venous Thromboembolism
Name of producer organisation	NHS England and NHS Improvement
Name and contact details of person dealing with report	Chris Gibbins chris.gibbins@nhs.net 07789 652367
Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)	n/a
Date of breach report	11/3/2020

2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant principle(s) and practice(s)	Trustworthiness: Principle T3 – Orderly Release Practice T3.4 – Statistical content has been made public or supplied to parties not essential for statistical production without prior permission for access, through accidental or wrongful release.
Date of occurrence of breach	January 2019 to 9 March 2020
<p>The team responsible for producing and publishing the statistics listed in Section 1 became aware on Friday 6 March 2020, that the access controls on one of our two main data warehouses (SIP) were not fully compliant with our policy for restricting access to those statistics prior to publication. Our policy is that only those involved in producing the statistics should have access to the information for England as a whole; and that those involved in managing day-to-day operations locally should only have access to the information for their geographical patch. Whilst the right controls were in place for the Tableau reports that feed off SIP, users with a particular piece of software (Visual Studio) could in theory use that to extract national data from the 'production' area of the underlying data warehouse.</p> <p>We worked with the system administrators on Friday 6 March and Monday 9 March to diagnose and resolve the problem. The issue was found to apply to 87 people and emerged at the time development on the Tableau reports commenced in early 2019. Whilst the system does not record an audit log, it is our belief that these users are unlikely to be aware that such access existed and we are not aware of any of those users accessing national information prior to publication. On Monday 9 March a fix was implemented that restricted access to those involved in producing the statistics. Over the coming days, we will be designing and implementing a process to manage who has that restricted access. This will be informed by the process operated successfully for our other data warehouse.</p>	

3. Impact of the breach

It is our belief that national information was not accessed by 'unauthorised' users prior to publication and that such information did not permeate outside of the data warehouse, either within the organisation or beyond.

4. Corrective actions (taken or planned) to prevent re-occurrence

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