



Department of Health & Social Care

Department of Health and Social
Care
39 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0EU

Amanda Pritchard
Chief Executive Officer
NHS England

06 December 2024

Dear Amanda,

1. **NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) Medicines Data (Amendment) Directions 2024**

- 1.1 I am writing on behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (**the Secretary of State**) to give directions amending the [NHS Business Services Authority \(NHSBSA\) Medicines Data Directions 2019](#) (**the Original Directions**)¹.
- 1.2 These Directions are given in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 254(1) and 304(9) to (12) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012² (**the 2012 Act**) and sections 13ZC and 272(7) and (8) of the National Health Service Act 2006³ (**the 2006 Act**).
- 1.3 These Directions are to be known as the **NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) Medicines Data (Amendment) Directions 2024** and come into force on the date after the day on which they are signed.

¹ <https://digital.nhs.uk/binaries/content/assets/website-assets/corporate-information/directions-and-data-provision-notice/secretary-of-state-directions/direction-11---to-support-bsa-data-flow-for-endorsement.pdf>. The Directions were given by the Secretary of State to NHS Digital on 9 August 2019. NHS Digital was abolished, and its functions transferred to NHS England, with effect from 1 February 2023, by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (Transfer of Functions, Abolition and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2023 (S.I. 2023/98.). By virtue of regulation 6, the Original Directions have effect as if references to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (or NHS Digital) were references to NHS England (and the Directions accordingly have effect as if given to NHS England).

² 2012 c.7. Relevant amendments were made by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (Transfer of Functions, Abolition and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2023 (S.I. 2023/98).

³ Section 13ZC was inserted by section 45 of the Health and Care Act 2022 (c.31).

2. Requirement for these Directions

- 2.1 In accordance with section 254(2)(b) of the 2012 Act, the Secretary of State considers that is in the interests of the health service in England for these Directions to be given.
- 2.2 In accordance with section 254(5) of the 2012 Act, the Secretary of State has consulted NHS England before giving these Directions.
- 2.3 In accordance with section 13ZC(5) of the 2006 Act, the Secretary of State considers these Directions to be in the public interest.

3. Purpose

These Directions amend the Original Directions to:

- 3.1 clarify the scope of the Data which the NHSBSA Medicines Data Information may collect and analyse, and
- 3.2 provide a more detailed description and greater clarity in relation to the purposes for which the data obtained by virtue of the Original Directions may be used.

4. Amendment to the Original Directions

- 4.1 The Original Directions are amended as follows.

- 4.1.1 Substitute the following paragraph:

“Pursuant to sections 254(1) and 254(6) of the Act, NHS Digital is directed to establish and operate an information system to be known as the **NHSBSA Medicines Data Information System** for the collection and analysis of data about medicines dispensed or supplied, as held by the NHS Business Services Authority and as specified in the **NHSBSA Medicines Data Information System Specification** (the Specification) attached to these Directions. The Specification may be updated periodically (within the confines of the scope set out in these Directions) by NHS Digital and agreed in writing by the Secretary of State.”

With

“NHS England is directed to establish and operate an information system to be known as the **NHSBSA Medicines Data Information System** for the collection and analysis of data about medicines dispensed or supplied, including such data held by the NHS Business Services Authority, as specified in the NHSBSA Medicines Data Information System Specification (the **Specification**) attached to these Directions. The Specification may be updated periodically (within the

confines of the scope set out in these Directions) by NHS England and agreed in writing by the Secretary of State.”.

4.1.2 Substitute the following paragraph:

“The purpose is to deliver comprehensive data about medicines dispensed or supplied, as currently held by the NHSBSA, and drive the linkage of medicines data with other data sets to provide intelligence about the safety and effectiveness of medicines.”

With

“The purpose of these Directions (**Purpose**) is to require the collection and analysis of patient level medicines data for medicines prescribed and dispensed or supplied to patients, including such data held by the NHS Business Services Authority, to provide a comprehensive and comparable national patient level data set about medicines use to be made available for planning, commissioning and research purposes, for example;

- when lawfully linked to other data held by NHS England, enable the monitoring of medicines utilisation, pharmacoeconomics, and research into the safety and effectiveness of medicines, with the aim of supporting improvements in patient outcomes; and
- support the monitoring and the use of medicines, including but not limited to, antimicrobials, in line with the UK Government’s strategy regarding the tackling of antimicrobial resistance.”⁴.

5. Continuing effect of the Original Directions

These Directions amend the Original Directions, which will continue in force, as amended by these Directions.

Yours sincerely



Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

06 December 2024