



Public Health England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

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Sarah Wilkinson
Chief Executive, NHS Digital
Health and Social Care Information Centre
1 Trevelyan Square
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Leeds
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26 September 2017

Dear Ms Wilkinson,

Re: Public Health England Direction to NHS Digital

I am writing to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (now known as and referred to in this letter as “NHS Digital”) on behalf of Public Health England (PHE). We are writing to provide a Direction to NHS Digital under section 254 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (“the Act”) that NHS Digital establish and operate a system for the collection of the Weekly ICU/HDU Flu Collection (UK Severe Influenza Surveillance System (USISS)). I’ve set out below full details of the relevant functions of Public Health England and the data collection required.

This Direction is given in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 254(1) and (6), 260(2)(d), 261(3), and 304(9), (10) and (12) of the Act.¹

In accordance with section 254(2)(a) of the Act, the information which could be obtained by complying with the Direction is information which it is necessary or expedient for the Secretary of State to have in relation to the exercise by the Secretary of State of his functions in connection with the provision of health services or of adult social care in England.

This Direction is to be known as the Weekly ICU/HDU Flu Collection (UK Severe Influenza Surveillance System (USISS)) Direction and comes into force on 23rd October 2017.

¹ 2012 c.7

NHS Digital is Directed not to publish information collected or produced by complying with this Direction, in accordance with section 260(2)(d). By virtue of section 261(3), NHS Digital is required to disseminate information as specified below.

Public Health England functions

Annex B of the Framework Agreement between the Department of Health and Public Health England instructs PHE to carry out on behalf of the Secretary of State certain of his statutory functions. This includes the duty under section 2A of the National Health Service Act 2006 to take such steps as the Secretary of State considers appropriate to protect the health of the public in England. Under the Act PHE, working with NHS England and the Department of Health, is responsible for the surveillance and control of infectious diseases, including influenza.

This collection relates to the collection of aggregate weekly data from all NHS Acute Trusts (Foundation and Non Foundation) on influenza confirmed patients admitted to intensive care during the influenza season.

The objectives of the collection are as follows:

1. Monitor and estimate the impact of influenza (both seasonal and pandemic) on the population
2. Describe the epidemiology of severe influenza (ICU admissions and deaths) in time, place and person
3. Be able to rapidly identify and describe the epidemiological features of a novel influenza virus
4. To monitor the impact of the introduction of the childhood influenza vaccination programme.
5. To inform evidence of community transmission of influenza and thus the recommendation to Department of Health to trigger anti-viral prescribing
6. Fulfil the requirements set out by the Chief Medical Officer's Statistical Legacy Group (CMO-SLG) or the Influenza Surveillance Strategy Group (ISSG) and meet the recommendations made by the World Health Organization (WHO) or European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) for surveillance of severe influenza.

Direction

Under section 254 of the Act, the Secretary of State for Health hereby directs NHS Digital to establish and operate a system for the collection of the Weekly ICU/HDU Flu Collection (UK Severe Influenza Surveillance System (USISS)).

The system to be established and operated under this direction will need to have the following functionality:

- Data Collection - ability for providers to submit the Weekly ICU/HDU Flu Collection (UK Severe Influenza Surveillance System (USISS)) data direct to NHS Digital;
- Data Supply – the functionality to provide the submitted data in real-time in relation to Weekly ICU/HDU Flu Collection (UK Severe Influenza Surveillance System (USISS)) to PHE for onward processing, analysis and publication.

Data to be collected

The level of data requiring collection by NHS Digital as part of the Weekly ICU/HDU Flu Collection (UK Severe Influenza Surveillance System (USISS)) is aggregate data in relation to influenza confirmed patients admitted to intensive care during the influenza season.

Detailed data levels can be found at Annex A. PHE would like NHS Digital to collect data from all NHS Acute Hospital Trusts. The collection is weekly and begins on 9th October 2017 and ends on 20th May 2018.

We have set out above how the collection of Weekly ICU/HDU Flu Collection (UK Severe Influenza Surveillance System (USISS)) data is relevant to the national surveillance of influenza in England.

Please accept this letter as a Direction under section 254(1) of the Act to NHS Digital to exercise the functions in relation to the informatics support service for the collection of weekly ICU/HDU flu aggregate data.

In accordance with s254(5) of the Act NHS Digital has been consulted before this Direction has been given.

Yours sincerely



Nick Phin
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ANNEX A – data set

ICU SURVEILLANCE MANDATORY SPECIFICATION

Flu Type	Number of admissions in Level 2 and Level 3 Care (HDU/ITU)																				Total
	Under 1	Age Group																			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17-44	45-64	65+	
Influenza A (H1N1) 2009																					
Influenza A (H3N2)																					
Influenza A, unknown subtype																					
Influenza B																					
Influenza nonsubtypable																					
Total																					

Flu type	Number of deaths in Level 2 and Level 3 Care (HDU/ITU)																				Total
	Under 1	Age Group																			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17-44	45-64	65+	
Influenza A (H1N1) 2009																					
Influenza A (H3N2)																					
Influenza A, unknown subtype																					
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