

BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

This document reports a breach of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, or the relevant Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Orders, to which the Code applies as if it included these orders.

1. Background information

Name of Statistical Output (including weblink to the relevant output or 'landing page')

Breastfeeding prevalence at 6 to 8 weeks after birth: 2016 to 2017 quarterly data, Q1 (experimental statistics)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/breastfeeding-at-6-to-8-weeks-after-birth-2016-to-2017-quarterly-data>

Breastfeeding prevalence at 6 to 8 weeks after birth, 2015-2016 annual data (experimental statistics)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/breastfeeding-at-6-to-8-weeks-after-birth-annual-data>

Name of Producer Organisation

Public Health England

Name and contact details of the statistical Head of Profession (Lead Official in an Arm's Length Body) submitting this report, and date of report

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2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2: Release practices

Date of occurrence

25 October 2016

Nature of breach (including links with previous breaches, if any)

Pre-release of breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks data was sent to four Department of Health (DH) staff who had been recently removed from the pre-release access list.

Reasons for breach

DH updated their pre-release list for breastfeeding statistics for the October release 3 days before pre-release due to a change in roles for a number of individuals since the statistics were last released in July. This information was relayed to the official statistics co-ordinator in PHE who advised that the product lead would need to be informed. However, this change was not communicated properly to the individual responsible for issuing the release or the product lead.

3. Reactions and impact (both within the producer body and outside)

The four people who should not have received the statistics were emailed the same day and asked to disregard and delete the briefing. The impact of the breach is low.

4. Corrective actions taken to prevent reoccurrence of such a breach (include short-term actions, and long-term changes made to procedures)

In future PHE official statistics leads will issue an email two weeks before a scheduled release asking people to confirm they should still be receiving the publication pre-release and that they will be available on the pre-release day.