

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



## 1. Core Information

<b>Title and link to statistical output</b>	NHS GP Workforce time series back to Sep15 <a href="https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/general-and-personal-medical-services">https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/general-and-personal-medical-services</a>
<b>Name of producer organisation</b>	NHS Digital
<b>Name and contact details of person dealing with report</b>	Adam Little <a href="mailto:Adam.little@nhs.net">Adam.little@nhs.net</a>
<b>Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)</b>	
<b>Date of breach report</b>	11.04.2019

## 2. Circumstances of breach

<b>Relevant principle(s) and practice(s)</b>	<b>Trustworthiness/T3.4 Orderly release</b>  The circulation of statistics in their final form ahead of their publication should be restricted to eligible recipients, in line with the rules and principles on pre-release access set out in legislation for the UK and devolved administrations. The details of those granted access should be recorded, together with clear justifications for access. No indication of the statistics should be made public and the statistics should not be given to any other party without prior permission for access. The list of recipients should be reviewed regularly and kept to a minimum.
<b>Date of occurrence of breach</b>	05.03.2019

The GP Workforce time series back to September 2015 is being recalculated and republished following methodological changes. Only data for December 2017, September 2018 and December 2018 was published in February 2019, with the rest due for release on 25 April 2019.

Following the 21 February 2019 publication, a Scottish Government analyst asked for "GPs excluding Locums" headcounts for the new data for all quarters. A member of the team provided this for the three published months, but also for a few of the not yet re-published months – some months were work-in-progress and a couple that were finalised.

This was spotted this week on 09.04.2019 after the team member left the organisation.

## 3. Impact of the breach

There is little external impact regarding this breach apart from the one analyst in the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government analyst has confirmed they didn't receive any other additional information, that they didn't share the numbers they did receive, and that they have deleted all trace of them.

It would seem that there may have been some momentary confusion about the restrictions on sharing pre-release material where the time period covered has already had data published for it - though just data under an older methodology that is being replaced.

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

**Short term:** The team awareness of the Code of Practice has been reviewed in a team meeting along with an overview of the Code of Practice and its practical implications, including the realm of pre-release.

**Longer term:** NHS Digital holds quarterly training sessions concerning the official statistics publications process, however a standard centrally organised quick introduction to the Code of Practice for all new starters on a monthly basis is being considered to make sure the requirements and their importance are universally stressed.