



Department
of Health &
Social Care

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

Sir James Mackey
Chief Executive Officer
NHS England

21st April 2026

Dear Sir James,

1. **The Health and Social Care Information Centre (Spine Services) (No.2) (Amendment) Directions 2026**

- 1.1 I am writing on behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (the **Secretary of State**) to amend **The Health and Social Care Information Centre (Spine Services) (No. 2) Directions 2014** (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 2012 (the **2012 Act**²), sections 13ZC and 272(7) and (8) of the National Health Service Act 2006³ and regulation 32 of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Constitution and Functions) and NHS England (Information Functions) Regulations 2013.⁴
- 1.3 These Directions come into force on the date after the day on which they are signed.

2. **Background**

¹ The [Spine Services \(no 2\) 2014 Directions](#). A hard copy of the directions can be obtained from Department of Health and Social Care, 39 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0EU.

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 2006 c.41. Section 13ZC was inserted by section 45 of the Health and Care Act 2022 (c.31).

⁴ S.I. 2013/259 as amended by S.I. 2023/98.

- 2.1 The Original Directions were issued to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (**NHS Digital**) by NHS England on 5 December 2014 to deliver Spine Services as defined in paragraph 1 and listed in the annex to the Original Directions (the **Original Annex**).
- 2.2 NHS Digital was abolished, and its functions transferred to NHS England, on 1 February 2023 by virtue of the Health and Social Care Information Centre (Transfer of Functions, Abolition and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2023/98 (the **Regulations**).⁵ By virtue of transitional provisions contained in the Regulations, the Original Directions have effect as if references to NHS Digital were references to NHS England and, accordingly, those Directions have effect as if given to NHS England. These Directions amending the Original Directions are therefore issued to NHS England.

3. Need for these Directions

- 3.1 In accordance with section 254(2)(b) of the 2012 Act, the Secretary of State considers that the information being obtained by complying with the Original Directions as amended by these Directions is information which is in the interests of the health service in England or of the recipients or providers of adult social care in England.
- 3.2 In accordance with section 254(5) of the 2012 Act, the Secretary of State has consulted NHS England before giving these Directions.
- 3.3 In accordance with section 13ZC(5) of the 2006 Act, the Secretary of State considers these Directions to be in the public interest.
- 3.4 In accordance with Regulation 32(1) of the Regulations the Secretary of State is requiring NHS England to exercise such systems delivery functions of the Secretary of State as specified in these Directions.

4. Amendment to the Original Directions

4.1 The Original Directions are amended as follows:

4.1.1 In paragraph 1(2) substitute:

““Spine services” means the services described in the Annex to these Directions as amended and notified by the Secretary of State in writing to HSCIC from time to time”

with

““Spine Services” means the services described in the Spine Services Requirements Specification published with these Directions, as updated periodically by the Secretary of State in consultation with NHS England”.

⁵ S.I. 2023/98.

4.1.2 Remove the Annex to the Original Directions.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. P. S.', is positioned below the 'Yours sincerely' text.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

Date signed 21st April 2026