

12 April 2024

IC-295641-Y7B2

Request

You asked us:

"1. How many NHS Data Breaches have there been in 2022, 2023 and so far in 2024?

1a) Can these be broken down into incident type? For example, of these, how many instances in which patient data was sent to the wrong recipient? How many incidents in which private information was either stolen, lost or left in an insecure location etc."

We received your request on 20 March 2024.

We advised you that we record data breaches by sector, for example "health", "justice" or "legal", we explained that we do not categorise an organisation as the "NHS". We asked you to clarify if you would like us to provide you with the figures for organisations with "NHS" in the title of their name, or if you would like the figures for the health sector which includes public and private providers.

On 2 April 2024 you clarified that you would like the requested information for the health sector including public and private providers.

We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOIA).

Our response

We confirm that we hold information in scope of your request.

Please see the table below showing the number of personal data breaches recorded by the ICO between 1 January 2022 and 20 March 2024. The table below reflects the year that the data breach was reported to the ICO by businesses in the health sector, this includes:

- Advisory boards and panels
- Ambulance service
- Commissioning
- Dentists
- General practitioner
- Health research
- Healthcare and pharmaceuticals
- Opticians
- Pharmacist
- Primary care
- Private healthcare providers
- Public health
- Representative and arm's length bodies
- Secondary care

Incident Type	2022	2023	2024
Alteration of personal data	7	7	0
Brute force	1	2	1
Data emailed to incorrect recipient	214	315	98
Data of wrong data subject shown in client portal	33	49	11
Data posted or faxed to incorrect recipient	210	188	40
Denial of service	4	0	0
Failure to redact	52	71	23
Failure to use bcc	29	41	16
Hardware/software misconfiguration	44	47	9
Incorrect disposal of hardware	4	0	0
Incorrect disposal of paperwork	14	17	2
Loss/theft of device containing personal data	16	33	8
Loss/theft of paperwork or data left in insecure location	179	172	25
Malware	3	15	0
Not provided	13	33	1
Other cyber incident	14	34	10
Other non-cyber incident	261	387	105
Phishing	45	49	24
Ransomware	105	33	10
Unauthorised access	261	370	98
Verbal disclosure of personal data	98	86	24
Total	1607	1949	505

We delete casework inline with our retention period, in most cases this is 2 years from the date of the case closure. Further data breaches may have been reported

in 2022 that have since been destroyed in line with our [retention policy](#) and will therefore not be reflected in the above figures.

This concludes our response to your request.

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response. Please let us know in writing if you want us to carry out a review. Please do so within 40 working days.

You can read a copy of our full [review procedure](#) on our website.

If we perform a review but you are still dissatisfied, you can complain to the ICO as regulator of the FOIA. This complaint will be handled just like a complaint made to the ICO about any other public authority.

You can [raise a complaint](#) through our website.

Your information

Our [privacy notice](#) explains what we do with the personal data you provide to us, and sets out [your rights](#). Our [Retention and Disposal Policy](#) details how long we keep information.

Yours sincerely,



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