COVID-19: Update for eDRIS Service Users – 25/03/2020

Due to current public health situation, eDRIS staff will increasingly be working remotely, may have to prioritise COVID19 work or may be reallocated to different work areas in the NHS as the situation requires. As such, you should be aware of these changes:

General Points to Note

- Continue to monitor the eDRIS website for further updates - https://www.isdscotland.org/Products-and-Services/eDRIS/
- The NSS.eDRIS@nhs.net email address should be used in preference to the general telephone (0131 275 7333) as staff are now working from home
- Allocation of new requests will continue as before but priority will be given to requests relating to COVID-19 research where such research is a directive of the Scottish or UK governments or other senior authority.
- Work will continue on existing projects but there may be delays in the service. eDRIS works with a number of organisations across Scotland including various data controllers, external NHS and non-NHS data providers, approval bodies and regulatory bodies. These organisations will also be under strain during this time. It is also possible that eDRIS staff will be reallocated to other health priority areas.
- New User Agreements - if a new user is to be added to a study that is in the safe haven, and if the eDRIS User Agreement cannot be physically signed during the COVID-19 outbreak then as a contingency eDRIS will accept an email authorisation.

Physical Safe Haven Access

From 19th March access to the physical safe havens room at the Bioquarter will cease as staff begin to work remotely. We have contacted data controllers to ask whether temporary remote access can be allowed and await responses but please be patient as they may be prioritising other work. Please continue to monitor the eDRIS website for updates.

Accessing the Safe Haven Remotely

Some researchers who access the Safe Haven from their place of work have requested permission to access the Safe Haven from home. Please contact your research co-ordinator if you wish to do so and please be aware:

- If your existing permissions explicitly allow remote access to the Safe Haven, then you may continue to access the Safe Haven remotely as you do now.
- The NHS Scotland Public Benefit and Privacy Panel has advised that they will allow remote access for all NHS Scotland data being accessed through the national safe haven for which they have given approval. This means if the study includes NHS data only, remote access is permitted subject to the requirements set out below.
- If the data you are working with includes data from these sources then the following steps should be followed:
  - NRS – If this is data that ISD holds on behalf of NRS and is part of the application that has been approved the NHS Scotland Public Benefit and Privacy Panel then the user can access the data remotely.
Education data, Census and other datasets for which Stats PBPP approval is required for access – Please see updated guidance on the eDRIS website and if remote access is required, research co-ordinators should be notified by 30th January.

Requirements for Remote Safe Haven Access (where permission has been granted)

- You must not access the Safe Haven from any public place (café, bus etc.) and only from a private residence
- You will still have to remote access into your organisational network before remotely accessing the Safe Haven. You will not be able to directly access from your home IP address.
- You must lock your computer at all times when not in use or you are away from your desk
- You must not permit friends or family to access your works computer and must lock your computer when they are in close proximity
- Your works laptop must be encrypted
- Any data breaches or hardware losses/theft should be reported to eDRIS as well as your employer
- Any data breaches resulting from working away with your usual office location could result in loss of your access to the Safe Haven and for your organisation
- Any deviation from these terms could result in loss of your access to the Safe Haven and for your organisation

Regards

Michael Sibley

Service Manager