



# Finding NHS numbers



## List of Records Failing to Trace

Every week new ePEX records are sent to **PDS** for automatic assigning and verifying of NHS numbers. The great majority of these records are successfully assigned a verified NHS number. Typically 40 to 50 records a week fail this trace. A list of failed records is printed out and manually investigated.

## Failure to Verify Record with NHS number

Some of these records already have a NHS number but **PDS** is unable to verify the number. In most cases this is a matter of correcting details on the ePEX record so as to agree with the National System. In some cases the NHS number is wrong and must be replaced with the correct number. In some cases the NHS number is clearly correct but it is not appropriate to correct details to agree with the National System. (An example would be where a woman has changed her name eg on msriage without informing her GP.) In these cases the record will be left at 05 status, sometimes after adding as an alias the name recorded on the National System. In a few complex cases the problem can not be immediately resolved and must be left for later investigation. There will occassionally be cases where the record has a correct NHS number but this fails to verify because the number has been removed from the National System. In these cases the record should be set at 11 status, to indicate logical deletion.

## Records without NHS numbers

Most of the records which fail to trace will have no NHS number. The Summary Care Record and Open Exeter<note tip>Open Exeter help desk 01392 251 289</note> are used to find the NHS number. Using variations of name and wide ranges of birth dates, will often find the NHS number. The use of wildcards is very helpful. The Summary Care Record allows wildcards \* after the first two characters of a name or postcode. There are limits to how wide a search can be carried out. After determining the *probable* NHS number it is sometimes uncertain if this number is correct. In these cases a search over a wide date of birth range typically 20 years can determine if there are plausible alternatives. If the *probable* NHS is not the only plausible number for the record then no number should be added to the ePEX record. The same obviously applies when no plausible NHS number can be found. ePEX records for which no NHS number can be convincingly found are changed to status 09. If the NHS number has been clearly determined, it is added to the ePEX record and the record status is changed to 01.

## GP Status

Some of the investigated records will either have no current GP or an incorrect GP. In these cases the GP record should be corrected to agree with the National System.

## Example of (Hypothetical) Manual Trace

We have a ePEX record for Mr Joe Bloggs DOB 17.03.1959 Postcode B1 3RB. Automatic identification of the NHS number fails. Searching for Jo\* Bloggs\* DOB between 01/01/1959 and 31/12/1959 Postcode B1\* produces an NHS number for Mr Joseph Bloggs DOB 17/08/1959 B1 3HS. There is no plausible alternative (search Jo\* Bloggs DOB between 01/01/1949 and 31/12/1969 Postcode B1 3\* produces no other candidates.) So NHS number is added DOB changed, and record status set to 01.

nhsnum ▼

Add page