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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**1974 No. 29**

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE,  
ENGLAND AND WALES**

**The National Health Service  
(Venereal Diseases) Regulations 1974**

<i>Made</i>	- - - -	<i>4th January 1974</i>
<i>Laid before Parliament</i>		<i>21st January 1974</i>
<i>Coming into Operation</i>		<i>1st April 1974</i>

The Secretary of State for Social Services, as respects England, and the Secretary of State for Wales, as respects Wales, in exercise of powers conferred upon them by section 7(5) and (6) of the National Health Service Reorganisation Act 1973 and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf, hereby make the following regulations:

**Citation, commencement and interpretation**

1.—(1) These regulations may be cited as the National Health Service (Venereal Diseases) Regulations 1974 and shall come into operation on 1st April 1974.

(2) The rules for the construction of Acts of Parliament contained in the Interpretation Act 1889 shall apply for the purposes of the interpretation of these regulations as they apply for the purposes of the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.

**Confidentiality of information**

2. Every Regional Health Authority and every Area Health Authority shall take all necessary steps to secure that any information capable of identifying an individual obtained by officers of the Authority with respect to persons examined or treated for any sexually transmitted disease shall not be disclosed except—

- (a) for the purpose of communicating that information to a medical practitioner or to a person employed under the direction of a medical practitioner in connection with the treatment of persons suffering from such disease or the prevention of the spread thereof, and
- (b) for the purpose of such treatment or prevention.

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3rd January 1974

*Keith Joseph*  
Secretary of State for Social Services

4th January 1974

*Peter Thomas*  
Secretary of State for Wales

### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The National Health Service (Venereal Diseases) Regulations 1968 (S.I. 1968/1624) imposed on hospital authorities an obligation to secure that information about venereal diseases obtained by their officers should be treated as confidential. These Regulations replace the 1968 Regulations which lapse on the repeal of section 12 of the National Health Service Act 1946 (c.81), and impose similar obligations on health authorities. They also extend the scope of the obligation so as to include all sexually transmitted diseases and not only those commonly known as venereal diseases.