



Saw Swee Hock  
School of Public Health

Tahir Foundation Building, 12 Science Drive 2, #10-01,  
Singapore 117549  
Tel: (65) 6516 4988 / 4989 Fax: (65) 6779 1489  
Website: [www.nus.edu.sg](http://www.nus.edu.sg)  
Company Registration No: 200604346E  
A member of the NUHS

## Notice for Collection of NRIC Numbers

28 September 2018

Dear Participants of the Singapore Population Health Studies (SPHS),

You may have heard of new guidelines about how organizations may use NRIC and other national identification numbers. These guidelines were issued by the Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC) on 31 August 2018. Because you have been participating in the Singapore Population Health Studies, and we collected your NRIC number in that study, I wanted to write to you so that you know how we use your NRIC number and how we are reviewing our processes in response to these new guidelines.

**Why do we use your NRIC number?** There are three main reasons. NRIC numbers are sometimes necessary when we need to return you the results of the research screening. They are also needed for obtaining certain data from medical records or national registries to supplement the survey data to facilitate population health research studies. Finally, NRIC numbers are also required for updating addresses correctly for us to continue following up with you in our population health studies.

**How do we protect your NRIC number?** Your personal data including the full NRIC number will continue to be properly safeguarded in our secure database. Our policy is to delete your personal data only if you request to withdraw from SPHS research.

**What are we changing because of the new guidelines?** Until now, we have been using your full NRIC number at each follow-up visit and at each interaction with you to ensure that we are collecting health data from the right person. We will be enhancing our work processes to use only part of your NRIC number (last 4 characters) together with your name or contact information for verifying your records, where practicable (e.g. rescheduling your appointment with us). We will still ask to see your physical NRIC to verify your identity, but will not make any copies of it. We expect to effect these process changes within twelve months, to be completed by 31 August 2019.

**What do you need to do?** No action is required. However, you are welcome to contact us at 6478 9608 or [sphs@nus.edu.sg](mailto:sphs@nus.edu.sg) should you have any queries or concerns.

Thank you for your understanding and for all the support you have given our population health research. We look forward to your continuing support!

Best regards,  
Associate Professor Alexander Cook  
Data Protection Officer  
Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health  
National University of Singapore