



Welcome to our Life Sciences newsletter!

A quick monthly read with useful information, articles, and views from our team of experienced DPOs on the latest data protection news specific to the Life Sciences.

LIFE SCIENCES IN THE NEWS

US quantum initiative highlights future encryption risks for Life Sciences

On 22 June 2026, President Trump signed two Executive Orders aimed at accelerating quantum computing in the United States. While the measures focus on strengthening US leadership in quantum technologies, they also highlight a growing cybersecurity challenge for organisations responsible for protecting sensitive data long-term.

This is particularly relevant for Life Sciences organisations, which are often required to retain clinical trial data for decades.

Shane Gohil, Tech and Security Sector Lead at The DPO Centre, said:

'Quantum computing forces a reassessment that most privacy programmes have yet to confront. We have long treated encryption as a durable safeguard, but quantum advances mean that assumption may no longer hold for data that must stay protected for years. 'Harvest now, decrypt later' is an operational reality. Data exfiltrated today can be stored and decrypted once the technology matures. Encryption remains a core safeguard, but organisations must now consider whether it will continue protecting long-lived data, particularly health records and biometrics.'

A DPO'S PERSPECTIVE

Although practical quantum attacks are not yet a reality, the long retention periods for clinical trial data mean sponsors should begin preparing now.

Lawrence Carter, Life Sciences Sector Lead at The DPO Centre, said:

'Clinical trial sponsors undertaking studies in the UK and EU are required to retain electronic Trial Master File (eTMF) data for at least 25 years. As quantum computing develops, it is becoming increasingly likely that today's encryption standards could be broken within that timeframe.'

'Sponsors should therefore start planning now. This includes monitoring the development of post-quantum cryptography, whilst also strengthening organisational measures, such as restricting access to sensitive systems and regularly reviewing who has access to long-term clinical trial data.'

Have a privacy query or need sector-specific support?

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