

Singapore says American leaked 14,200 HIV records

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Singapore's health ministry accused an American on Monday of stealing and leaking the records of 14,200 people infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, before January 2013.

It said Mikhy K. Farrera Brochez recently put the official records of

5,400 Singaporeans and 8,800 foreigners online. These included HIV test results, names, identification numbers, phone numbers, addresses and other [health information](#), it said.

"While access to the confidential information has been disabled, it is still in the possession of the unauthorized person, and could still be publicly disclosed in the future," it said in statement. "We are working with relevant parties to scan the internet for signs of further disclosure of the information."

The ministry said Brochez worked in Singapore as a lecturer for a period before he was jailed for several drug and fraud-related offenses and deported last year. His partner, who headed the ministry's National Public Health Unit from March 2012 to May 2013, had access to the confidential information, it added.

It identified his partner as Ler Teck Siang, a Singaporean doctor who has been charged under the Official Secrets Act for failing to take reasonable care of [confidential information](#) relating to HIV-positive patients. The charge is pending before the courts.

Ler was convicted last September of helping Brochez cheat and providing [false information](#) to the police and [health ministry](#), the statement said. He was sentenced to 24 months in jail but has since filed an appeal which will be heard in March.

The ministry said it discovered that Brochez had obtained the confidential records in 2016, and reported it to police. Both Brochez and Ler's properties were searched and "all relevant material found were seized and secured by the police," it said.

The ministry said it realized last May that Brochez "still had part of the records" from 2016 but they hadn't been disclosed in any way. It said it

lodged another [police report](#) and notified the affected individuals.

The ministry said it was notified last Tuesday that "more information" could be in Brochez's possession and that it had been disclosed online.

Police are investigating and the authorities are seeking help from foreign counterparts.

The ministry said it has put more safeguards in place to prevent information from being mishandled. Since September 2016, the downloading and decrypting of [information](#) from the HIV registry requires the approval of two people instead of one, it said.

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