

How we keep your records confidential

Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

We have a duty to

- Maintain full and accurate records of the care we provide to you
- Keep records about you confidential, secure and accurate
- Provide information in a format that is accessible to you (for example in large type if you are partially sighted)

We will not share information that identifies you for any reason, unless:

- You ask us to do so
- We ask and you give us specific permission
- We have to do this by law
- We have special permission for health or research purposes
- We have special permission because the interests of the public are thought to be of greater importance than your confidentiality

Who are our partner organisations?

We may share information with the following main partner organisations:

- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- NHS Trusts (Hospitals)
- Special Health Authorities
- Ambulance Service

We may also share your information, with your consent and subject to strict sharing protocols about how it will be used with:

- Social Services
- Education Services
- Local Authorities
- Voluntary Sector Providers
- Private Sector

Anyone who receives information from us also has a legal duty to:

KEEP IT CONFIDENTIAL!

If you require this leaflet in a different format or you need further information or assistance, please contact:

Our guiding principle is that we are
holding your records in
STRICT CONFIDENCE

How we use your health records

Better information, better health



This leaflet explains:

- Why the NHS collects information about you and how it is used
- Who we may share information with
- Your right to see your health records and how we keep your records confidential

Why we collect information about you

In the National Health Service we aim to provide you with the highest quality of health care. To do this we must keep records about you, your health and the care we have provided or plan to provide to you.

These records may include:

- Basic details about you such as address, date of birth, next of kin
- Contact we have had with you such as clinical visits
- Notes and reports about your health
- Details and records about your treatment and care
- Results of x-rays, laboratory tests etc
- Relevant information from people who care for you and know you well, such as health professionals and relatives

It is good practice for people in the NHS who provide care to:

- Discuss and agree with you what they are going to record about you
- Give you a copy of letters they are writing about you
- Show you what they have recorded about you, if you ask

How your records are used

The **NHS Care Record Guarantee** for England sets out the rules for the use of patient information. It gives you rights about the use of that information in the NHS:

- Controls on other's access
- Options you have to further limit access
- Access in an emergency
- When someone cannot make their own decisions

The **NHS Constitution** sets out the rights to which patients, public and staff are entitled, and pledges which the NHS is committed to achieve. The people who care for you use your records to make joint decisions with you and care professionals to ensure care is safe.

Others may also need to use records about you to:

- Check the quality of care (such as clinical audit)
- Protect the health of the general public
- Manage and keep track of NHS spending
- Investigate concerns or complaints you or your family have about your health care
- Teach health workers
- Help with research

Some information will be held centrally to be used for statistical purposes. We have a legal duty to ensure that individual patients cannot be identified. We may use identifiable data for NHS purposes such as research and auditing. This information will only be used with **your consent**, unless the law requires us to pass on the information.

You have the right

You have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the common law duty of confidence (the Disability Discrimination and the Race Relations Acts may also apply).

You also have the right to ask for a copy of all records about you, this is called a Subject Access Request (you may have to pay a fee):

- Your request must be made in writing to the organisation holding your information
- There may be a charge to have a printed copy of the information held about you
- We are required to respond to you within 40 days
- You will need to give adequate information (for example full name, address, date of birth, NHS number etc)
- You will be required to provide identification before any information is released to you

If you think anything is inaccurate or incorrect, please inform the organisation holding your information.

Notification

The Data Protection Act 1998 requires organisations to notify the Information Commissioner of the purposes for which they process personal information.

The details are publicly available from the Information Commissioner:

**Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF**

**0303 123 1113
or 01625 545 745
<http://ico.org.uk/>**