

Patient Information Sheet on Confidentiality

When a patient uses our services, they provide or contribute confidential information. We need certain information for the benefit of the patient by supporting the delivery of your care.

By law, using a patient's information must be clear and transparent about how it is being used and why it is being collected.

Patients using our services are required to be informed, that their information will be used to support secondary uses such as referral to a hospital for advanced care.

Patients using our services also have the right to change their minds about a disclosure decision at any time before the disclosure is made and can do so afterwards to prevent further disclosures where an activity requires a regular transfer of their personal information.

Patients retain the right to restrict the disclosure of their confidential personal information, explicitly declining to allow information to be shared by us to other third-party organisations or other individuals.

Under the Access to Health Records Act (1998) patients are allowed to view their medical records. Copies of such records can also be requested, in writing. We hold patient information on computer and comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

To provide you with the care you need, we hold the details of your consultations, illnesses, tests, prescriptions and other treatments that have been recorded by everyone involved in your care and treatment e.g. Dentist, hygienist. This information is stored electronically on computer files by practice staff.

We sometimes disclose some of your personal health information with other organizations involved in your care. For example, when your Dentist refers you to a specialist at the hospital we will send relevant details about you in the referral letter and receive information about you from them.

We need to use some of your personal health information for administrative purposes. In order to receive payment for services provided to you, we have to disclose basic details about you to the NHS Board responsible for this area and to the Business Services Agency Service. These organizations have a role in protecting public funds and are authorised to check that payments are being properly made. We are required to cooperate with these checks and the disclosure of your data is a necessary part of our provision of health care services.

Sometimes, we may participate in studies that are designed to improve the way services are provided to you or to check that our performance meets required standards and benchmarks. Whenever we take part in activities such as these, we will ensure that as far as possible, any details that may identify you are not disclosed.

Where you need a service jointly provided with a local authority, we will seek your permission before giving them your details.

Sometimes we are required by law to pass on information, without your consent, for example:

- where there is a risk of harm to you or other people
- where we believe that the reasons for sharing are so important that they override our obligation of confidentiality (for example, to support the investigation and prosecution of offenders or to prevent serious crime)
- where we have been instructed to do so by a Court
- where we are legally required to do so e.g. the notification of crimes to the government is a legal requirement.

Our use of your personal health information is covered by a duty of confidentiality and is regulated by the General Data Protection Regulation (formally known as Data Protection Act) The Regulation gives you a number of rights in relation to how your personal information is used, including a right to access the information we hold about you, consent.

Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential and adheres to a Code of Practice on Protection Patient confidentiality.

