

HOW YOUR GP PRACTICE HANDLES YOUR PERSONAL DATA

Purpose of this leaflet:

This leaflet has been produced to help you understand what currently happens to information you share with your health professional and how that information may be used by the NHS both for and beyond your direct care.

The majority of patients come to their GP Practice when they have something wrong with them. Problems discussed are usually of a personal nature and patients expect that the information they are sharing will remain confidential. This confidentiality is central to the trust between healthcare professionals and you as our patient. Without doctor-patient confidentiality, you may be reluctant to disclose information of a personal nature that we may need to help provide you with the best possible healthcare.

What we record at Our Practice

Healthcare professionals in our practice record information about the care we provide.

The type of information that is recorded includes the following;

- Demographics, e.g. address, telephone number, e-mail, date of birth, gender, etc.
- What you tell us when you see us in consultations e.g. about your physical and psychological health and social circumstances.
- Diagnoses, investigations, treatments, referrals, family background.
- Social information e.g. housing status, alcohol, smoking data.
- Third party sources e.g. hospital letters, A&E attendances, relatives, carers, insurance companies, solicitors.

A very useful website explaining all the ways in which your medical data may be shared is available at: <http://www.nhsdatasharing.info/>

What we already share about you:

We share different types of information about our patients. These include:

- Personal information about you and your illness, when needed for your direct care, e.g. hospital consultants, A&E and 'Out of Hours' doctors, district nurses, midwives, counsellors, and the summary care record.
- Patient identifiable information to public health, in order to arrange programs for childhood immunisations, communicable diseases, cervical smears and retinal screening.
- With explicit consent, personal information to other organisations outside the NHS, e.g. insurance companies, benefits agencies.
- Limited information about you, if relevant, to protect you and others, e.g. to social services child protection investigations.
- Under certain acts of parliament to protect you and others e.g. court order.
- Summary information which is anonymised (can not identify you) e.g. quality and outcome frameworks (QoF), medical research and clinical audit.

It is also important to understand that currently a limited amount of patient information or data is used mostly at local level to help design health services or undertake clinical audit. Some information is used at a national level.

Information from lots of individual patients allows the NHS to build a picture of what is happening to the nation's health. The majority of this information is anonymised before it leaves the healthcare professional, in other words no one can identify who the information relates to.

How we protect your personal information:

Your GP is responsible for protecting your information and to do this they comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). As part of the DPA, all healthcare professionals have an obligation only to share information on a need to know basis. For further information on the DPA please visit:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents>

The physical storage of information is on secure servers in Leeds, which are protected by firewalls. Access to the information is by strong authenticated password. The number of people who have access to your information is limited to members of the practice team and in a few instances some pre agreed data is shared with other health care professionals (e.g. District Nurses, hospital clinicians you may be referred to, etc.) but on a need to know basis.

Further information leaflets are available on our website at:

<http://www.kingedwardst.nhs.uk/practice-leaflets>