




How we keep your records confidential

We will not disclose your information to third parties without your permission unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as when the health or safety of others is at risk or where the law requires information to be passed on. With your consent, information can also be shared with relatives, partners or friends who act as a carer for you.

Anyone who receives information from us is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential

We are required by law to report certain information to the appropriate authorities. Occasions when we must pass on information include:








-  notification of births and deaths
-  where we encounter infectious diseases which may endanger the safety of others such as meningitis or measles (but not HIV/AIDS)
-  where a court order has been issued

Our guiding principle is to hold your records in strict confidence.





Who are our partner organisations?

You may be receiving care from other people as well as the NHS (like Social Services). We may need to share some information about you so we can all work together for your benefit. We will only ever use or pass on information about you to others involved in your care when it is in your best interest to do so.

The principal partner organisations which may share information are:

-  NHS Trusts, including Primary Care Trusts & Hospitals
-  General Practitioners (GPs)
-  Dentists
-  Ambulance Services
-  Social Services
-  Education Services
-  Strategic Health Authorities

Your information may also, subject to strict agreements called 'Information sharing protocols', be shared with:

-  Local Authorities
-  Prison Liaison
-  Voluntary Sector Providers
-  Private Sector Providers

How you can get access to your own information

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 you can apply to find out what information about you is held in your health records and on computer. This is known as "right of subject access".

If you want to see your records you should make a written request to the NHS organisations where you are being, or have been, treated. You are entitled to receive a copy but should note that a charge will usually be made. You should also be aware that in certain circumstances your right to see some details in your records may be limited, in your own interest or for other reasons, such as containing information related to a third person.

Your Information







What you need to know

This leaflet explains why information is collected about you and the ways in which this information may be used

Why we collect information about you





Your doctor and other health professionals caring for you keep records about your health and any treatment and care you receive from the National Health Service. These help ensure that you receive the best possible care from us. They may be written down (manual records), or held on a computer. The information may include:

-  basic details about you, such as name and address
-  contacts we have had with you, such as hospital stays and clinic visits
-  details and records about your health and the treatment and care you receive
-  results of investigations, such as X-rays and laboratory tests
-  relevant information from other health professionals, relatives or those who care for you and know you well

You can help us to keep this information accurate by informing us of any changes in your circumstances.

How your records are used to help you

Your records are used to guide and administer the care you receive to ensure:

-  your doctor, nurse or any other healthcare professionals involved in your care have accurate and up-to-date information to assess your health and decide what care you need should you require treatment in the future
-  full information is available should you see another doctor, or be referred to a specialist or another part of the NHS
-  there is a good basis for assessing the type and quality of care you have received
-  your concerns can be properly investigated if you need to complain










NHS Strategic Tracing Service

The NHS Strategic Tracing Service (NSTS) is a computerised system that makes it easy for us to verify your administrative details (name, address, date of birth and GP). This will provide reassurance that the information we hold about you is up to date.

The Register does not contain any of your clinical information.

How your records are used to help the NHS

Your information* may also be used to help us:

-  monitor and look after the health of the general public
-  review the care we provide to ensure it is of the highest standard
-  make sure our services can meet patient needs in the future (you may be sent a questionnaire but you do not have to complete this)
-  prepare statistics on NHS performance
-  conduct health research and development**
-  audit NHS accounts and services
-  teach and train healthcare professionals
-  pay your GP, dentist and hospital for the care they provide
-  investigate complaints, legal claims or untoward incidents

Some of this information will be held centrally, but where this is used for statistical purposes, stringent measures are taken to ensure that individual patients cannot be identified. Anonymous statistical information may also be passed to organisations with a legitimate interest, including universities, community safety units and research institutions.



*Where it is not possible to use anonymised information, personally identifiable information may be used for essential NHS purposes. This will be done only with your consent, unless the law requires information to be passed on to improve public health.

**You will be specifically asked for consent if there is a proposal to use your records in education or research projects.

Contact Numbers for the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Community PALS

Telephone: 08000-151548 or 01242-242156 Admin.

Hospitals & Ambulance PALS

Cheltenham	Telephone: 08454-223268 (office hours)	0800 953 1321 (out of hours)
Gloucester	Telephone: 08454-226831 (office hours)	0800 953 1367 (out of hours)