

- Provide information in a format that is accessible to you (e.g. in large type if you are partially sighted).

We shall **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 because we believe that the reasons for sharing are so important that they override our obligation of confidentiality (e.g. to prevent someone from being seriously harmed)

*Our guiding principle is that we are holding your information in strict confidence.*

### How you can arrange to access your or your child's health records

You have the right to privacy and confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA), the Human Rights Act 1998 and the common law duty of confidence (the Equality Act 2010 may also apply).

You have the right to know what information we hold about you, what we use it for and if the information is to be shared, who it will be shared with.

You also have the right to apply for access to the information we hold about you. Access covers the right to obtain a copy of your record in permanent form and the right to have the information provided to you in a way you can understand (and explained where necessary, e.g. abbreviations). Should you wish to see your own or your child's health records or obtain a copy of them, you should telephone or write to the Legal Department and your request will be processed.

Please note that a charge will be made for administration and the time involved in processing your request.

### Contact details

Legal Department, 2nd Floor, Clinical Sciences Building, University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust, Clifford Bridge Road, Coventry, CV2 2DX or telephone: 024 7696 8813.

### How you can request copies of clinical letters sent to your GP

You are entitled to request copies of letters written between health professionals about your care; for example copies of letters sent to your GP following a clinic appointment or hospital stay.

If you would like to receive copies of letters, please ask your consultant or their secretary who will arrange it for you.

### If you do not wish your personal information to be shared

If you do not wish personal information that we hold about you to be used or shared in the way that is described in this leaflet, please discuss the matter with us. You have the right to object, but this may affect our ability to provide you with care or advice.

*The trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 7514/15 and we will do our best to meet your needs.*

#### Document History

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The Trust operates a smoke free policy

## Patient Quality & Safety

# Patient Information: a guide to why the NHS collects information about you and how it is used

This leaflet explains why University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust collects personal information about you, the ways in which such information may be used, and your rights under the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Your information is used to help the NHS provide you or your child with the best possible care.**



## Keeping your health information confidential

All health professionals working for the National Health Service (NHS) have a duty to maintain the highest level of confidentiality about patient information.

In some instances, you may be receiving care from other organisations as well as the NHS. We may need to share some information about you with them, so we can all work for your benefit. Anyone who receives confidential information about you from us is under a duty of confidence and unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example; when the health or safety of others is at risk (including child protection or safeguarding vulnerable adults concerns), we will not disclose your information to third parties without your permission.

### The purpose of this leaflet is to tell you:

- How we use your information
- Who we may be required to share your information with
- How we keep your information confidential
- How you can arrange to have access your own (or your child's) information
- How you can request copies of clinical letters sent to your GP
- What to do should you not wish your personal information that we hold to be shared

### How we use your information

As you know, health professionals caring for you (or your child) manage information about your health and the care you receive from the NHS. This information may be either recorded in health records, manually or electronically and is important to help ensure that you (and your child) receive the best possible care from us.

Your information is used in the following ways to guide and administer the care you receive:

- To ensure that your health professional has accurate and up to date information to provide a good basis for any treatment or advisory

services we provide to you;

- To ensure that full and correct information is available to other healthcare providers from whom you may be receiving treatment;
- To ensure your treatment is safe and effective, and the advice we provide is appropriate and relevant to you;
- To ensure that there is a good basis for referring to and checking on the type and quality of treatment you have received in the past;
- To ensure that your concerns can be properly investigated should you wish to complain.

### Who we may be required to share your health information with

We may be required to share information about you with the NHS regulatory authorities, for example the NHS Litigation Authority and the Care Quality Commission, as part of their assessment processes to ensure that policies and procedures relating to the uses and handling of patient information are being followed. Your records however would not be removed or copied from hospital premises during these assessments.

The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) also requires information from NHS organisations to enable it to learn from patient safety incidents. The NPSA does not however retain any personal data of patients, staff or visitors and should such information be passed to them it is deleted. Information held centrally is not used to make decisions about the treatment or care that you receive from your hospital or GP.

In certain circumstances we are required by law to report information to the appropriate authorities. This information is only provided after formal authority has been given by a qualified health professional. For example, notification of new births; where we encounter infectious diseases which may endanger the safety of others; where a formal court order has been issued or safeguarding concerns.

Whilst always preserving your confidentiality, your information may also be used when assisting with teaching and training of health care professionals; assisting with health research (if this research requires identifiable information, your written permission will be sought prior to research being undertaken) or assisting with national and local audits. Clinical audits help the Trust to know we are meeting clinical standards of care.

Information may also be used outside the hospital but within the NHS, for example other NHS Trusts where you may need treatment.

### Sharing information

The Trust is a signatory with other agencies for information sharing protocols and agreements which set out the ethical and legal principles for information exchanges. They also set out the limited and defined circumstances under which personal information is shared. The other agencies that we may share information with are Social Services, Education Services, Local Authorities, Voluntary Sector Providers, the Police or Public Health.

Sharing of personal information is also necessary at times of administering justice, exercising statutory, government or other public functions in the public interest such as protecting children, safeguarding vulnerable adults and care of the elderly.

### How we keep your records confidential

We have a duty to keep your health information confidential and in order to do so, we:

- Maintain full and accurate records of the care we provide to you
- Keep records about you confidential, secure and accurate