

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 and secure
- Provide information in a format that is accessible to you (e.g. 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, or
- We have special permission because the interests of the public are thought to be of greater importance than your confidentiality—for example, if you had a serious medical condition that may put others you had come into contact with at risk



**We hold your records in
STRICT CONFIDENCE**

Who are our partner organisations?

We may share information with the following main partner organisations:

- Ambulance Services
- Community Services
- Hospital Services

We may also share your information, with your consent and subject to strict sharing protocols on 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:

Liz Morris at the practice on 01903 717154

**Dr Byars and Partners
The Park Surgery
St Flora's Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex BN17 6BF
01903 717154**

HOW WE USE YOUR HEALTH RECORDS

Better Information, Better Health

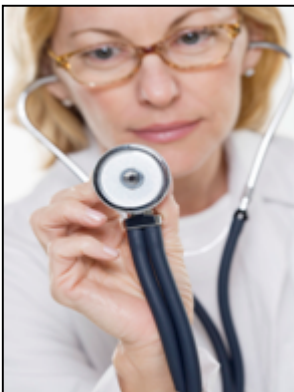


This leaflet explains:

- *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, and
- Show you what they have recorded about you, if you ask

How your records are used

The people who care for you use your records to:

- Provide a good basis for all health decisions made in consultation with you and other health care professionals
- Deliver appropriate health care
- Make sure your health care is safe and effective, and
- Work effectively with others providing you with health care

Others may also need to use records about you to:

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

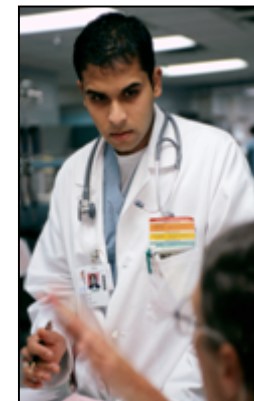
Some information will be held centrally to be used for statistical purposes. In these instances we take strict measures to ensure that individual patients cannot be identified.

We use anonymous information, wherever possible, but on occasions we may use personal identifiable information for essential NHS purposes such as research and auditing.

However, **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 (DPA), 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 (a fee may be charged)

- 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 working 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 ID 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.

How do I access my health records?

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, you have a legal right to access your health records.

If you want to see your health records, you should contact your GP in the first instance to arrange a date and time to come in and read them.

You do not have to give a reason for wanting to see your records.

Hospital Records

As well as having a copy of your health records, the surgery will also have a summary of any hospital tests, or treatment, that you have had.

Any hospitals where you have had treatment, or tests, will also hold records.

To see your hospital health records, you will have to contact the Hospital Trust where you were seen / received treatment.

Charges

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 (Fees and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2001 the maximum fee that can be charged for providing copies of health records is £10 for computer records and £50 for copies of manual records or a mixture of manual and computer records.

Charges are for copying and posting the records only and should not result in a profit for the record holder.

Some types of records, such as x-rays, may be expensive to copy.

Power of Attorney

Your health records are confidential, and members of your family are not allowed to see them, unless you give them written permission, or they have 'Power of Attorney'.

A lasting 'Power of Attorney' is a legal document that allows you to appoint someone to make decisions for you, should you become incapable of making decisions yourself.

The person you appoint is known as your Attorney.

An Attorney can make decisions about your finances, property, and welfare.

It is very important that you trust the person you appoint as Attorney, so that they do not abuse their responsibility.

A legal 'Power of Attorney' must be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian before it can be used.

Some Things Must Be Kept Private



The NHS is dedicated to protecting your information

In order to provide you with the best possible healthcare, we need to maintain proper records of your health and make sure that this is available to your medical team, wherever and whenever possible.

All of our staff are trained in their responsibilities to protect your data and are under legal obligations not to disclose this information to unauthorised bodies or people.

Your medical records are vital

We use your records to help us to give you proper healthcare and advice. We also need records to manage and plan the NHS itself in order to provide proper accounting for the public money we spend and to have the right resources in the right place.

We also use medical records in research to help find cures and treatments for illnesses. This helps us and other research bodies better understand diseases and determine which treatments work best under certain circumstances.

When we use this information we make sure that, wherever possible, we do not use personal details such as your name and address, in order to protect your confidentiality.

When releasing information to researchers, we give them only the minimum data necessary, and all their research is carefully vetted

If you have any queries around Data Protection please contact:

Sally Walker, Practice Manager,

The Park Surgery

01903 717154