

# National Data Opt Out Policy

National Data Opt-Out Arrangements are changing from end March 2020

NHS arrangements for patients to opt-out of data sharing processes in relation to data held at the GP Practice have been updated. From end of March 2020 GP Practices will no longer be able to record patient opt out preferences.

In order for your Opt-Out choice to be effective under the new data sharing process, you will need to register your Opt-Out with the National Data Opt Out service. You can record your choice via the NHS website, or by phone (NHS Digital Contact Centre: 0300 303 5678) or post or via the NHS app.

## **Your Data Matters to the NHS**

Information about your health and care helps us to improve your individual care, speed up diagnosis, plan your local services and research new treatments. The NHS is committed to keeping patient information safe and always being clear about how it is used.

## **How your data is used**

Information about your individual care such as treatment and diagnoses is collected about you whenever you use health and care services. It is also used to help us and other organisations for research and planning such as research into new treatments, deciding where to put GP clinics and planning for the number of doctors and nurses in your local hospital. It is only used in this way when there is a clear legal basis to use the information to help improve health and care for you, your family and future generations.

Wherever possible we try to use data that does not identify you, but sometimes it is necessary to use your confidential patient information.

### **You have a choice**

You do not need to do anything if you are happy about how your information is used. If you do not want your confidential patient information to be used for research and planning, you can choose to opt out securely online or through a telephone service. You can change your mind about your choice at any time.

Will choosing this opt-out affect your care and treatment?

No, choosing to opt out will not affect how information is used to support your care and treatment. You will still be invited for screening services, such as screenings for bowel cancer.

### **What do you need to do?**

If you are happy for your confidential patient information to be used for research and planning, you do not need to do anything.

To find out more about the benefits of data sharing, how data is protected, or to make/change your opt-out choice visit [www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters](http://www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters)

### **Useful Links / Downloads**

<https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/our-work/keeping-patient-data-safe/how-we-look-after-your-health-and-care-information/your-information-choices/opting-out-of-sharing-your-confidential-patient-information>

[/https://www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters/](https://www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters/)

### **National Data Opt Out – Update to Privacy Policy**

Blakewater Healthcare is one of many organisations working in the health and care system to improve care for patients and the public.

Whenever you use a health or care service, such as attending Accident & Emergency or using Community Care services, important information about you is collected in a patient record for that service. Collecting this information helps to ensure you get the best possible care and treatment.

The information collected about you when you use these services can also be used and provided to other organisations for purposes beyond your individual care, for instance to help with:

- improving the quality and standards of care provided
- research into the development of new treatments
- preventing illness and diseases
- monitoring safety
- planning services

This may only take place when there is a clear legal basis to use this information. All these uses help to provide better health and care for you, your family and future generations. Confidential patient information about your health and care is only used like this where allowed by law.

Most of the time, anonymised data is used for research and planning so that you cannot be identified in which case your confidential patient information isn't needed.

You have a choice about whether you want your confidential patient information to be used in this way. If you are happy with this use of information you do not need to do anything. If you do choose to opt out your confidential patient information will still be used to support your individual care.

To find out more or to register your choice to opt out, please visit [www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters](http://www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters). On this web page you will:

- See what is meant by confidential patient information

- Find examples of when confidential patient information is used for individual care and examples of when it is used for purposes beyond individual care
- Find out more about the benefits of sharing data
- Understand more about who uses the data
- Find out how your data is protected
- Be able to access the system to view, set or change your opt-out setting
- Find the contact telephone number if you want to know any more or to set/change your opt-out by phone
- See the situations where the opt-out will not apply

You can also find out more about how patient information is used at:

<https://www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/> (which covers health and care research); and

<https://understandingpatientdata.org.uk/what-you-need-know> (which covers how and why patient information is used, the safeguards and how decisions are made)

You can change your mind about your choice at any time.

Data being used or shared for purposes beyond individual care does not include your data being shared with insurance companies or used for marketing purposes and data would only be used in this way with your specific agreement.

Health and care organisations have until 2020 to put systems and processes in place so they can be compliant with the national data opt-out and apply your choice to any confidential patient information they use or share for purposes beyond your individual care. Our organisation 'is / is not currently' compliant with the national data opt-out policy.

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and your information**

The ICO recognises the unprecedented challenges the NHS and other health professionals are facing during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The ICO also recognise that 'Public bodies may require additional collection and sharing of personal data to protect against serious threats to public health.'

The Government have also taken action in respect of this and on 20th March 2020 the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care issued a Notice under Regulation 3(4) of The Health Service (Control of Patient Information) Regulations 2002 requiring organisations such as GP Practices to use your information to help GP Practices and other healthcare organisations to respond to and deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to look after your healthcare needs during this difficult time, we may urgently need to share your personal information, including medical records, with clinical and non-clinical staff who belong to organisations that are permitted to use your information and need to use it to help deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. This could (amongst other measures) consist of either treating you or a member of your family and enable us and other healthcare organisations to monitor the disease, assess risk and manage the spread of the disease.

Please be assured that we will only share information and health data that is necessary to meet yours and public healthcare needs.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has also stated that these measures are temporary and will expire on 30th September 2020 unless a further extension is required. Any further extension will be will be provided in writing and we will communicate the same to you.

Please also note that the data protection and electronic communication laws do not stop us from sending public health messages to you, either by phone, text or email as these messages are not direct marketing.

It may also be necessary, where the latest technology allows us to do so, to use your information and health data to facilitate digital consultations and diagnoses and we will always do this with your security in mind.

If you are concerned about how your information is being used, please contact our DPO using the contact details provided in this Privacy Notice.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/our-work/keeping-patient-data-safe/how-we-look-after-your-health-and-care-information/your-information-choices/opting-out-of-sharing-your-confidential-patient-information>

[Information leaflet](#)

[Information poster](#)

[Guide for young people](#)

[Guide for Carers](#)