

Health Records

Leaflet 2

Confidentiality and Your Health Records

This leaflet aims to explain the principles that guide how we share your health records, in order to provide you with the very best possible care.

Employees within the NHS are bound by a legal duty of confidentiality and professional codes of conduct to keep your information confidential.

1. Our Caldicott Guardian

In line with NHS national policy we have appointed a senior clinician as our Caldicott Guardian. The Caldicott Guardian's role is to oversee how staff members use personal health information and to ensure that your rights to confidentiality are respected.

2. Sharing your information

Members of the health and social care team providing you with direct care may share your personal health information with each other as necessary for your care.

This team may include nurses, doctors, therapists, pharmacists, social workers, laboratory staff, and clerical support staff plus students and trainees in medicine, nursing or other healthcare professions.

All team members are also bound by the same high standards of confidentiality as other NHS employees.

The information shared is restricted to items that they "need to know" in order to help you

This is called the "need to know" principle.

Where ever possible we will ask for your permission to share this information. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to share information without your permission

Your information will not be shared with health and social care staff, trainees or students who do not need to know.

With your consent, your relatives, friends and carers can also be kept up to date with the progress of your treatment.

If you are concerned about your information being shared as above you need to discuss this initially with your health care practitioner e.g. physiotherapist, district nurse etc

You can also contact PALS or write to our Caldicott Guardian via the contact details below.

We will always respect your wishes, except in specific circumstances such as, where information is necessary to protect the vital interests of an individual e.g. for child protection or to support the prevention /detection of serious crime.

3. Legal and National Requirements

We are required by law to report certain information to the appropriate authorities. This only happens after a qualified health practitioner has given formal permission. Occasions when we must pass on information include notifications of new births, infectious diseases such as meningitis or measles (but not HIV), or to report information in relation to the Mental Health Act.

4. How you can help us

Allow us to share as much information about you as we need in order provide you with effective health care. If you have decided not to allow us to share records of your care with others, tell us if you change your mind. Preventing us from sharing information may make diagnosis difficult and treatment dangerous, and could prevent research. In extreme circumstances, we might not be able to offer you the most appropriate treatment.

Others may wish to see your records:

- Only let others – insurers, mortgage lenders, employers, and solicitors – look at your records if you are sure that it is necessary.

When giving consent to share your records with others:

- Think carefully about whom you give permission to and why
- Try to restrict their access to what they need to know and no more

In the future, we may contact you and ask your permission to use your records for important research. Please give us permission unless you feel strongly that you do not want us to use your information in this way.

5. Your Health Record Series

Other leaflets in this series include;

- Leaflet 1 – Your Health Record

Our policies are available on our website at

<https://www.nhft.nhs.uk/documents?smbfolder=179>

Of particular relevance are:

- Use of Information and Communications Technology Policy
- Records Management Policies

If you do not have access to a computer or have any queries, or concerns about anything in this leaflet please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service at:

PALS Office
Northampton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Front Block,
St Mary's Hospital,
London Road,
Kettering,
NN15 7PW
Email: pals@nhft.nhs.uk

To contact the NHFT Caldicott Guardian, please use the address below

Caldicott Guardian
Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Berrywood Hospital
Berrywood Drive Duston
Northampton NN5 6UD

Please click [here](#) to give us your feedback on the information provided in this leaflet and to help us to continue to improve our services.