

Anyone who gets 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. This is only provided after formal permission has been given by a qualified health professional whose job it is to give such permission. Occasions when we must pass on information include:

- Notification of new births
- Where an infectious disease may put others at risk, such as meningitis or measles (but not HIV/AIDS)
- Where a court order has been issued telling us to do so.

Who are our partners?

The main partners we share information with include other NHS organisations such as hospitals, family doctors (GPs), and ambulance services. Your information may also be shared, subject to strict agreements, with social services, education services, and voluntary or private providers of care services.

How you can get access to your own health records

You have a legal right to know what information is held about you on computer and in certain manual records. This is known as “right of subject access”. It applies to your health record.

If you want to see your health records please make a written request to the health centre where you are being treated. You are entitled to receive a copy of your records, but please note that you might have to pay for this. You will be told this before your records are given to you. You should also be aware that in certain circumstances your right to see some details in your health records may be limited in your own interest or for other reasons.

Further information

If you would like to know more about how we use your information, or if you do not wish to have your information used in any of the ways described in this leaflet, please speak to the service manager of the centre where you are being treated.

If you would like a large print version or a translation of this leaflet in a foreign language, please contact our PALS service on **0800 587 8078** (weekdays 9am to 5pm) or the manager of the service where you are being treated.

The information we hold about you

What you need to know

This leaflet explains why we collect, hold and use information about you.

This leaflet has been produced for NHS Lambeth and Lambeth Community Services



Why we collect information about you

Your doctor and other health professionals caring for you need to collect, hold and use information about you. We call this information your health record. Your health record contains information about you, your health, and the treatment and care you receive from the NHS. These records help us ensure we give you the best possible care. We may write your records down (paper records) or hold them on a computer. The records may include:

- Basic details about you, such as address and next of kin
- Contacts we have had with you, such as clinic visits
- Notes and reports about your health and any treatment and care you need
- Details and records about the treatment and care you receive
- Results of tests, such as X-rays and laboratory tests
- Relevant information from other health professionals, relatives or those who care for you and know you well.

How we use your records to help you

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

- Your doctor, nurse or any other healthcare professional looking after you has accurate and up-to-date information to assess your health and decide what

care you need when you visit in the future

- Full information is available should you see another doctor, or be referred to a specialist or another part of the NHS.
- We have a good basis for assessing the type and quality of care you have received
- We can investigate any complaints properly.

How your records are used to help the NHS

Your information may also be used to help us:

- Look after the health of the general public
- Pay your GP, dentist and hospital for the care they provide
- Audit NHS accounts and services
- Investigate complaints, legal claims, or when things go wrong
- Ensure our services can meet patient needs in the future
- Prepare statistics on NHS performance
- Review the care we provide to ensure it is of the highest standard
- Teach and train healthcare professionals
- Conduct health research and development.

Some of this information will be held centrally, by the Department of Health or other healthcare bodies. Where this is used for statistical purposes thorough

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 such as research and auditing services. This will only be done with your consent, unless the law requires information to be passed on to improve public health.

How we respect your confidentiality

Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to respect your confidentiality. If you receive care from another organisation (such as social services) we may need to share some information about you so we can all work together for your benefit. This can also mean that you don't have to give the same information repeatedly.

We will only ever share information about you with others who have a genuine need for it. 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 when the law requires information to be passed on.