

# Sunlight Group Practice

## How we use your data



This leaflet explains how Sunlight Group Practice use your data and why the surgery collects information about you

### **Why do we collect information about you?**

Your Doctor and other health professionals caring for you keep records about your health and any treatment and care you receive from the NHS. These help to ensure that you receive the best possible care from us. They may be written down (manual records) or held on computer. These 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 have received.
- Details and records about the treatment and care you receive
- Results of investigations such as x-rays and laboratory tests.
- Relevant information from other health professionals or those who care for you and know you well.

### **How are your records used to help you?**

Your records are used to guide professionals in the care you receive to ensure that:

- Your doctor, nurse or any other healthcare professional involved in your care has accurate and up to date information to assess your health and decide what care you need.
- Full information is available if you see another doctor, are referred to a specialist or another part of the NHS.
- There is a good basis for assessing the type and quality of care you have received.
- Your concerns can be properly investigated if you need to complain.

### **Who are our partner organisations?**

We may also have to share your information, subject to strict agreements on how it will be used, with the following organisations;

- NHS England
- NHS Trusts
- Specialist Trusts
- Independent Contractors such as Dentists, Opticians, Pharmacists
- Private Sector Providers
- Voluntary Sector Providers
- Ambulance Trusts
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Social Care Services
- Local Authorities
- Education Services
- Fire and Rescue Services
- Police
- Other 'data processors'

You may be receiving care from other people as well as the NHS. So that we can all work together for your benefit we may need to share information about you. The surgery only ever uses or passes on information about you if people have a genuine need for it in your interest.

We share clinical information about you with our colleagues in secondary care—by this we mean the hospitals that might treat you. So if we refer you to see a consultant we will include details

about you and your past medical history as well as why we are sending you to see someone. Anyone who received information from us is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential. Your relatives, carers or friends can only be kept up to date with your medical history or treatment if you consent for this to happen. Children under the age of 16 are usually classed as minors and therefore information regarding their care is shared with their parents, unless they are thought to be able to understand their own treatment and condition.

### **How are your records used to help the NHS?**

Your information may be used to help us:

- Assess the needs of the general population.
- Make sure our services can meet patient needs in the future.
- Review the care we provide to ensure it is of the highest standard.
- Teach and train healthcare professionals.
- Conduct health research and development.
- Pay your GP, Dentist and hospital for the care they provide.
- Audit NHS accounts and services
- Prepare statistics on NHS performance
- Investigate complaints, legal claims or significant events.

Some of this information will be held centrally but where it is used for statistical purposes stringent measures are taken to ensure that individual patients cannot be identified. Anonymous statistical information may also be passed to organisations with legitimate interest, including universities, community safety units and research institutions.

Where it is not possible to use economised information, personally identifiable information may be used for essential NHS purposes, these may include 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.

Some of our patients are asked to allow their consultations to be recorded; the recordings will be used for training and examination purposes only.

The recordings are reviewed by training GPs and their trainees or by an examiner. They are kept for no longer than 3 months on secure files and are fully destroyed following that time. Please note that this is in accordance with GDPR guidelines.

### **How do we keep your records confidential?**

Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

You may be receiving care from other organisations as well as the NHS (like Social Services). We may need to share some information about you so that we can all work together for your benefit. We can only ever use or pass on information about you if the others involved in your care 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 and safety of others is at risk or where the law requires information to be passed on.

Anyone who receives 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 qualified health professionals. Occasions when we must pass on information include:

- Notifications of new births
- Where we encounter infectious diseases which may endanger the safety of others such as meningitis or measles (but not HIV / AIDS).
- Where a formal court order has been used.

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

## **Summary Care Record**

A Summary Care Record is an electronic record which contains information about the medicines you take, allergies you suffer from and any bad reactions to medicines you have had.

Having this information stored in one place makes it easier for healthcare staff to treat you in an emergency, or when your GP practice is closed.

## **Care Data**

Information about you and the care you receive is shared, in a secure system, by healthcare staff to support your treatment and care.

It is important that the NHS can use this information to plan and improve services for all patients. We would like to link information from all the different places where you receive care, such as your GP, hospital and community service, to help us provide a full picture. This will allow us to compare the care you received in one area against the care you received in another, so we can see what has worked best.

Information such as your postcode and NHS number, but not your name, will be used to link your records in a secure system, so your identity is protected. Information which does not reveal your identity can then be used by others, such as researchers and those planning health services, to make sure we provide the best care possible for everyone. How your information is used and shared is controlled by law and strict rules are in place to protect your privacy.

We need to make sure that you know this is happening and the choices you have.

Your personal confidential data will be automatically shared – if you wish to opt out / dissent then please contact reception for further details.

Please contact the reception desk if you have any further questions.

## **How do you gain access to your own health records?**

The Data Protection Act of March 2000 allows you to find information that is held on computers or in manual records, this right is called the 'right of subject access'. If you wish to see your medical records then you should make a written request to the NHS organisation where you are or have been treated. You are entitled to receive a copy but please be aware that there may be a charge for this. Also in certain circumstances your right to see some details may be limited in your own interests or for other reasons.

If you wish to register any objection to the sharing of confidential information as outlined above or wish for further information or wish to discuss any issues of confidentiality please contact the Practice Manager at Sunlight Group Practice

Any objection will be respected if possible unless the disclosure is required by law or is essential in order to protect you or someone else from the risk of death or serious harm.

## **External Software Providers**

Sunlight Group Practice currently uses one external software provider. This is Docmail; a system that sends patients postal reminders to attend the surgery for regular reviews or vaccinations.

Docmail has achieved compliance with all the requirements set out by the Department of Health regarding using/keeping/deleting data sent to it and it is used by a number of other GP surgeries and health organisations around the country.

The Docmail website uses the highest strength 128 bit encryption, required by the NHS security standards so you can be sure that your details will be safe. All manufacturing, information processing and mailings are undertaken under the guidance of these standards

If you have any questions regarding Docmail please contact the Practice Manager.

