

How South Norfolk Healthcare uses information - what you need to know

These pages explain your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018. The Data Protection Act controls how your personal information is used by South Norfolk Healthcare. Everyone responsible for using data must make sure the information is used fairly and lawfully.

Who are we?

South Norfolk Healthcare (SNH) works on behalf of your GP surgery. It is a Community Interest Company established in 2010 by 16 GP practices within South Norfolk. SNH currently delivers a number of referral services to Clinical Commissioning Groups across Norfolk.

The Referral Management Service is dedicated to discussing the choices available patients. Once the Referral Management Service receives an appointment request from a patient's GP a specialist booking advisor will call each patient to help them book an appointment in a location and at a time that are convenient.

Our address is South Norfolk Healthcare CIC, The Innovation Centre, Norwich Research Park, Norwich. NR4 7GJ. Tel: 01603 964520.

Why we collect Information about you

In carrying out our role as a Referral Management Service we may keep your information in written form and/or in digital form. The records may include basic details about you, such as your name and address or may also contain more sensitive information about your health and social care usage.

How your Information is used

We only use your personal confidential data for lawfully and in order for us to effectively provide and administer the Referral Management Service for purposes as listed below:

- To support you in managing your own care.
- To ensure that appropriate information is available to all those who treat you medically and care for you professionally.

We process your data only because your GP asks us to. In formal language, article 6 (1) of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the legal basis of processing data for South Norfolk Healthcare will be; "that processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject or processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller".

If you have a complaint about South Norfolk Healthcare we will use your information to communicate with you and to investigate any concern that you raise with in line with our complaint policy. Please see; <http://www.northnorfolkccg.nhs.uk/referral-management-service> for more details. When investigating a complaint then the information provided by the complainant (including personal details like for example name, address) may need to be shared as appropriate in order for the complaint to be investigated.

The Referral Management Service will on occasion use information to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of its services such as ensuring that patients have completed their intended treatment(s). You will be asked as part of this process for your agreement to be contacted.

Healthcare organisations like your GP and the hospital you attend will use this information to support you with any treatment or contact that you may have, which is known as for “direct care purposes”. It helps them provide the most appropriate care for you as an individual and they may share information with other health professionals to ensure that they can make informed decisions. Where this information is shared, your confidentiality and privacy will be protected. To make sure this takes place, there are clear rules in our own procedures as well as national legislation.

Using non-identifiable information for purposes other than direct healthcare

South Norfolk Healthcare uses anonymised patient data for business analysis and to assist local commissioning but you will not be identifiable in these circumstances. Your anonymised information may be used to help assess the needs of the general population and make informed decisions about the provision of future services. This information is used to identify areas where our services need to expand, to improve & to change, in order to support our population fully and also to support the flow of funding from one NHS organisation to another. Such information can also be used to conduct health research and development, monitor NHS performance, to help the NHS plan for the future and to investigate complaints in respect of the services we commission.

In addition, healthcare organisations, such as your GP Practice or the hospital that you visit, hold information about you in order to support the treatment that is provided. There are measures outlined in law which protect the information that is held by these organisations. These measures ensure that information is only shared appropriately and in line with your wishes.

There are clear processes in place to say how this information can be used and what safeguards must be in place to protect patients. The ways in which information should be made anonymous are governed by the Department of Health.

What kinds of information we use

The Referral Management Service can hold various different types of information and you may hear many different terms used the following are those that the Referral Management Service uses

- **Identifiable information** – containing details that identify individuals. We may use personal information about you such as your name and address or other times we use more sensitive information about your health.

The Referral Management Service only has access to identifiable information where a legal basis exists to hold that information. These are outlined in the [How your information is used](#) section of this document.

- **Person confidential data** – information which on its own or with other information can identify you. This term describes personal information about identified or identifiable individuals, which should be kept private or secret and includes dead as well as living people.
- **Anonymised information** – about individuals but with identifying details removed and so cannot be tracked back to you. Where unique identifiers such as your name and full address have been removed so the information is no longer 'person identifiable' This information is used to plan health care services.
- **Pseudonymised data** – where personal information about you is replaced with a code. This can also be shared with third parties who without the key would not be able to identify you. This is often used for example, when information is needed for research purposes.
- **Aggregated information** – anonymised information grouped together so that it cannot easily be put back together in order to identify individuals.

Where possible, we ensure your information is anonymised / aggregated or pseudonymised (especially when using information for purposes other than for direct patient care).

Organisations that share information

In order for the Referral Management Service to perform its function, information is shared from various organisations, which include: general practice, acute hospitals and local Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Where information sharing is required with third parties, we will always have a relevant data sharing agreement in place. Permission to share must be given by our Caldicott Guardian, who is the senior person in the Referral Management Service responsible for ensuring the protection of confidential patient and service user information.

The law provides some NHS bodies, particularly the Health and Social Care Information Centre (NHS Digital), with permission to collect and use patient data to help commissioners to design and procure the combination of services that best suit the population that they serve. The patient data that is supplied is not in a form that will identify you.

There may be circumstances where we are required to share information about you owing to a legal obligation, such as for the benefit of public health in the event of a pandemic. Anyone who receives information from us is also under a legal duty to keep this information confidential.

Linking Data

Your NHS number, GP practice and treatment details are kept so that your information from each service can be linked together securely within either an NHS Accredited Safe Haven or a *Data Services for Commissioners Regional Office* in a controlled environment. This gives

us a fuller picture of the health of people and the services required to support them to stay healthy they use this information to provide and improve health services for you and everyone.

When analysing current health services and proposals for developing future services it is sometimes necessary to link separate individual datasets to be able to produce a comprehensive picture. This may involve linking primary care GP data with inpatient, outpatient, and A&E data. In some cases there may also be a benefit to link to local services such as radiology, physiotherapy, audiology etc., as well as mental health and community-based services such as Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT), district nursing, podiatry etc. When carrying out this analysis, the linkage of these datasets is always done using a unique identifier that does not reveal a person's identity

What safeguards are in place

It is everyone's legal right to expect that information held and used about you is safe and secure, and is only used for the agreed purpose(s).

The Referral Management Service only uses information that may identify you in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. This requires that we process personal data only if there is a legitimate basis for doing so and that any such processing is fair and lawful.

Confidentiality and security of information

Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential and comply with the [Common Law Duty of Confidence](#). The information we do hold about you, whether in paper or electronic form, is therefore protected from unauthorised access. Under the [NHS Confidentiality Code of Conduct](#), all our staff are also required to protect your information, inform you of how your information will be used, and allow you to decide if and how your information can be shared. All Referral Management Service staff receive annual training on how to do this. This is monitored by the Referral Management Service and can be enforced through disciplinary procedures.

Your Rights & Access to your Information

Registration

The Referral Management Service is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) to collect information (data) for a variety of purposes. A copy of the registration is available through the ICO website [link to ICO register of data controllers](#) (search by name).

Retention and destruction of records

All records held by the Referral Management Service will be kept for the duration specified by National guidance for whichever speciality or area it was required from the Department of Health, [NHS Digital Records Management Code of Practice](#), and in line with [local Clinical Commissioning Group Information Governance Policies](#). All and any data which has reached its maximum time to be kept specified in the guidance will be disposed of confidentially in the Referral Management Service records management policy.

The [NHS Care Record Guarantee](#) is a commitment that all NHS organisations (and other organisations which provide NHS-funded care) will use your records in ways that respect your rights and promote your health and wellbeing.

The [NHS Constitution](#) establishes the principles and values of the NHS in England. It provides a summary of your legal rights and contains pledges that the NHS is committed to achieve, including certain rights and pledges concerning your privacy and confidentiality.

Your Rights

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 you have the general right to see or be given a copy of personal data held about you. This right can be exercised via submission of a Subject Access Request (SAR) to the Referral Management Service to the organisation that is in charge of your data. In the case of the Referral Management Service, this is your GP practice. If you wish to have sight of, or obtain copies of your own personal healthcare records you will need to apply to your **GP Practice**.

Everyone has the right to see, or receive a copy of information held that can identify them, with some exceptions. You do not need to give a reason to see your information.

Further information on Subject Access Requests can be found via the Information Commissioners Office (ICO): ico.org.uk/for-the-public/personal-information/

Objections

Your right to opt-out of information sharing

The Referral Management Service will not publish any information that identifies you.

You have the right to refuse information sharing at any moment in time. There are possible consequences to not sharing but these will be fully explained to you to help you with making your decision. You should talk with your GP surgery about this because we do not have the legal powers to assist you directly with this.

Complaints / Appeals

South Norfolk Healthcare have a number of key roles which support the protection of your data: In the event that you believe the Referral Management Service has not complied with the Data Protection Act, either in responding to a Subject Access Request or in the way we have processed your personal information, you have the right to make a complaint by contacting:

Key Roles in the Referral Management Service

Data Protection Officer (DPO) – The South Norfolk Healthcare DPO is Howard Green. The DPO role is to provide advice and guidance to the company and our employees on the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and to monitor the organisation's compliance.

Caldicott Guardian - The South Norfolk Healthcare Caldicott Guardian is Dr Michael Leeper. The Guardian actively supports work to enable information sharing where it is appropriate to share, and advises on options for lawful and ethical processing of information.

Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) – The South Norfolk Healthcare SIRO is Gemma Britton who is a member of the Senior Management Board with overall responsibility for an organisation's information risk policy. The SIRO is accountable and responsible for information risk across the organisation. The SIRO ensures that everyone is aware of their personal responsibility to exercise good judgement, and to safeguard and share information appropriately.

The company's DPO, Caldicott Guardian or SIRO can be contacted at our company address; South Norfolk Healthcare CIC, The Innovation Centre, Norwich Research Park, Norwich. NR4 7GJ. Tel: 01603 964520.

Further Information

If you would like to know more about the Referral Management Service uses your information please use the [Contact Us](#) section of our website.