

# Your health records

**The NHS wants to make sure you and your family have the best care now and in the future.** Your health and adult social care information supports your individual care.

**Unless you have chosen to opt out,** your confidential patient information can be used for research and planning. **You are able to make or change your decision at any time.** Your confidential patient information provides numerous benefits. It is used in research to find cures and better treatments for diseases like diabetes and cancer.

Most of the time, **we use anonymised data** for research and planning. So your confidential patient information isn't always needed. **If you do opt out, data that does not identify you may still be used.**

Confidential patient information can also be used to plan health and care services more effectively. The NHS and local authorities can plan where they need to provide further care services more efficiently.

**With your data, we are better able to develop and improve health and care services for the future.** This helps to improve health and social care for you and your family.

The NHS collects health and care data from all NHS organisations, trusts and local authorities. Data is also collected from private organisations, such as private hospitals providing NHS funded care. Research bodies and organisations can request access to this data. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/your-health-records/>

**There are very strict rules on how your data can and cannot be used, and you have clear data rights.** Access to confidential patient information will **not** be given for marketing purposes or insurance purposes - unless you specifically request this.

**Protection of your confidential patient information is taken very seriously and is looked after in accordance with good practice and the law.**

**Every organisation** that provides health and care services will take every step to:

- ensure data remains secure
- use anonymised data whenever possible
- use confidential patient information to benefit health and care
- not use confidential patient information for marketing or insurance purposes (unless you specifically request this)
- make it clear why and how data is being used
- respect your decision if you decide to opt out
- only use information about you where allowed by the law

All NHS organisations must provide information on the type of data they collect and how it is used. Data release registers are published by NHS Digital and Public Health England, showing records of the data they have shared with other organisations.

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## Manage your choice

**Online:** <https://www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters/>

Use this service to request that your confidential patient information is not used beyond your own individual care.

**Telephone:** 0300 303 5678 Open: 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).

You may contact the NHS Digital Contact Centre to verify your identity and discuss your data sharing choices. We may be able to guide you through the online service or set a choice on your behalf.

**Parents or legal guardians** may also set and manage a choice on behalf of their child under the age of 13.

You can set and manage a choice on behalf of **another individual, who is unable to manage their choice independently**. For example, if you have power of attorney.

**If you decide to opt out**, this will be respected and applied by NHS Digital and Public Health England. These organisations collect, process and release health and adult social care data on a national basis. Your decision will also be respected and applied by all other organisations that are responsible for health and care information by March 2020.

**An opt-out will only apply to the health and care system in England.** This does not apply to your health data where you have accessed health or care services outside of England, such as in Scotland and Wales.

**If you choose to opt out, your data may still be used during some specific situations. For example, during an epidemic where there might be a risk to other people's health.**

**For more information on where opt outs do not apply visit.**

<https://www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters/manage-your-choice/where-opt-outs-dont-apply/>