Linden Medical Centre

Reviewed August 2026
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Policy Owner Practice Manager

Privacy Notice

Your information, what you need to know

This privacy notice explains why we collect information about you, how that information will be used, how we keep it safe and confidential and what your rights are in relation to this.

Why we collect information about you

Health care professionals who provide you with care are required by law to maintain records about your health and any treatment or care you have received within any NHS organisation. These records help to provide you with the best possible healthcare and help us to protect your safety.

We collect and hold data for the purpose of providing healthcare services to our patients and running our organisation which includes monitoring the quality of care that we provide. In carrying out this role we will collect information about you which helps us respond to your queries or secure specialist services. We will keep your information in written form and/or in digital form. The records will include basic details about you, such as your name and address. They will also contain more sensitive information about your health and also information such as outcomes of needs assessments.

Details we collect about you

The health care professionals who provide you with care maintain records about your health and any treatment or care you have received previously (e.g. from hospitals, GP practices, Emergency Departments, etc.). These records help to provide you with the best possible healthcare. Records which this GP Practice will hold about you will include the following:

- Details about you, such as your address and next of kin
- Any contact the surgery has had with you, such as appointments, clinic visits, emergency appointments, etc.
- Notes and reports about your health
- Details about your treatment and care
- Results of investigations, such as laboratory tests, x-rays, etc.
- Relevant information from other health professionals, relatives or those who care for you

How we keep your information confidential and safe

Everyone working for our organisation is subject to the Common Law Duty of Confidence. Information provided in confidence will only be used for the purposes advised with consent given by the patient, unless there are other circumstances covered by the law. The NHS Digital Code of Practice on Confidential Information applies to all NHS staff and they are 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 of our staff members are expected to make sure information is kept confidential and receive training on how to do this.

The health records we use will be electronic, on paper or a mixture of both, and we use a combination of working practices and technology to ensure that your information is kept confidential and secure. Your records are backed up securely in line with NHS standard procedures. We ensure that the information we hold is kept in secure locations, is protected by appropriate security and access is restricted to authorised personnel.

We also make sure external data processors that support us are legally and contractually bound to operate and prove security arrangements are in place where data that could or does identify a person are processed.

We are committed to protecting your privacy and will only use information collected lawfully in accordance with:

- Data Protection Legislation
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Human Rights Act
- Common Law Duty of Confidentiality
- NHS Codes of Confidentiality and Information Security
- Health and Social Care Act 2015
- And all applicable legislation

We maintain our duty of confidentiality to you at all times. We will only ever use or pass on information about you if we reasonably believe that others involved in your care have a genuine need for it. We will not disclose your information to any third party without your permission unless there are exceptional circumstances (such as a risk of serious harm to yourself or others) or where the law requires information to be passed on.

How we use your information

Improvements in information technology are also making it possible for us to share data with other healthcare organisations for the purpose of providing you, your family and your community with better care. For example it is possible for healthcare professionals in other services to access your record with your permission when the practice is closed. This is explained further in the Local Information Sharing section below.

Under the powers of the Health and Social Care Act 2015, NHS Digital can request personal confidential data from GP Practices without seeking patient consent for a number of specific purposes, which are set out in law. These purposes are explained below.

You can choose to withdraw your consent to your personal data being shared for these purposes. When we are about to participate in a new data-sharing project we will display prominent notices in the Practice and on our website at least four weeks before the scheme is due to start. Instructions will be provided to explain what you have to do to ‘opt-out’ of the new scheme. Please be aware that it may not be possible to opt out of one scheme and not others, so you may have to opt out of all the schemes if you do not wish your data to be shared.

You can object to your personal information being shared with other healthcare providers but should be aware that this may, in some instances, affect your care as important information about your health might not be available to healthcare staff in other organisations. If this limits the treatment that you can receive then the practice staff will explain this to you at the time you object.

To ensure you receive the best possible care, your records are used to facilitate the care you receive. Information held about you may be used to help protect the health of the public and to help us manage the NHS.

Assessing Treatment Outcomes

Information is used by Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT) to assess the effectiveness of providing psychotherapy treatment to patients with long term conditions. NHS numbers and a summary of the number of visits to the practice before and after treatment is shared with BHFT. If you do not wish your information to be shared for this purpose please let your GP know.

Child Health Information

We wish to make sure that your child has the opportunity to have immunisations and health checks when they are due. We share information about childhood immunisations, the 6-8 week new baby check and breast-feeding status with NHS Berkshire Health Foundation Trust health visitors and school nurses, and with NHS South Central and West Commissioning Support Unit, who provide the Child Health Information Service in Berkshire on behalf of NHS England.

Clinical audit

Information will be used by the clinical commissioning group (CCG) for clinical audit to monitor the quality of the service provided to patients with long terms conditions. When required, information will be held centrally and used for statistical purposes (e.g. the National Diabetes Audit). When this happens, strict measures are taken to ensure that individual patients cannot be identified from the data.

Clinical Research

We get requests from organisations to use our information for research purposes - we will always ask your permission before releasing any information for this purpose.

Improving Diabetes Care

Information that does not identify individual patients is used to enable focussed discussions to take place at practice-led local diabetes review meetings between health care professionals. This enables the professionals to improve the management and support of these patients.

The Practice shares your diabetes related data with the Diabetic Eye Screening Programme operated by Health Intelligence (commissioned by NHS England). This supports your invitation for eye screening (where you are eligible and referred by the Practice) and ongoing care by the screening programme. This data may be shared with any Hospital Eye Services you are under the care of to support further treatment and with other healthcare professionals involved in your care, for example your hospital consultant.

For further information, take a look at Health Intelligence's Privacy Notice on the diabetic eye screening website: www.inhealth-intelligence.com/privacy-notices-and-security-policy/

Individual Funding Request

An 'Individual Funding Request' is a request made on your behalf, with your consent, by a clinician, for funding of specialised healthcare which falls outside the range of services and treatments that CCG has agreed to commission for the local population. An Individual Funding Request is taken under consideration when a case can be set out by a patient's clinician that there are exceptional clinical circumstances which make the patient's case different from other patients with the same condition who are at the same stage of their disease, or when the request is for a treatment that is regarded as new or

experimental and where there are no other similar patients who would benefit from this treatment. A detailed response, including the criteria considered in arriving at the decision, will be provided to the patient's clinician.

Invoice Validation

Invoice validation is an important process. It involves using your NHS number to identify which CCG is responsible for paying for your treatment. Section 251 of the NHS Act 2006 provides a statutory legal basis to process data for invoice validation purposes. We can also use your NHS number to check whether your care has been funded through specialist commissioning, which NHS England will pay for. The process makes sure that the organisations providing your care are paid correctly.

Local Information Sharing

Your GP electronic patient record is held securely and confidentially on an electronic system managed by your registered GP practice. If you require attention from a health professional such as an Emergency Department, Minor Injury Unit or Out Of Hours service, the professionals treating you are better able to give you safe and effective care if relevant information from your GP record is available to them.

Where available, this information can be shared electronically with other local health and care providers via a secure system designed for this purpose. Depending on the service you are using and your health and care needs, this may involve the professional accessing a secure system that enables them to view relevant parts of your GP electronic patient record (e.g. Connected Care or your Summary Care Record).

In all cases, your information is only accessed and used by authorised health and social care professionals in Berkshire based organisations who are involved in providing or supporting your direct care. Your permission will be asked before the information is accessed, other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. emergencies) if the healthcare professional is unable to ask you and this is deemed to be in your best interests (which will then be logged).

National Fraud Initiative - Cabinet Office

The use of data by the Cabinet Office for data matching is carried out with statutory authority under Part 6 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. It does not require the consent of the individuals concerned under Data Protection legislation. Data matching by the Cabinet Office is subject to a Code of Practice. For further information see:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-data-matching-practice-for-national-fraud-initiative

National Registries

National Registries (such as the Learning Disabilities Register) have statutory permission under Section 251 of the NHS Act 2006, to collect and hold service user identifiable information without the need to seek informed consent from each individual service user.

Risk Stratification

'Risk stratification for case finding' is a process for identifying and managing patients who have or may be at-risk of health conditions (such as diabetes) or who are most likely to need healthcare services (such as people with frailty). Risk stratification tools used in the NHS help determine a person's risk of suffering a particular condition and enable us to focus on preventing ill health before it develops.

Information about you is collected from a number of sources including NHS Trusts, GP Federations and your GP Practice. A risk score is then arrived at through an analysis of your de-identified information. This can help us identify and offer you additional services to improve your health.

Risk-stratification data may also be used to improve local services and commission new services, where there is an identified need. In this area, risk stratification may be commissioned by NHS Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group. Section 251 of the NHS Act 2006 provides a statutory legal basis to process data for risk stratification purposes. Further information about risk stratification is available from: https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/tsd/ig/risk-stratification

If you do not wish information about you to be included in any risk stratification programmes, please let us know. We can add a code to your records that will stop your information from being used for this purpose. Please be aware that this may limit the ability of healthcare professionals to identify if you have or are at risk of developing certain serious health conditions.

Safeguarding

To ensure that adult and children's safeguarding matters are managed appropriately, access to identifiable information will be shared in circumstances where it is legally required for the safety of the individuals concerned.

Summary Care Record (SCR)

The NHS in England uses a national electronic record called the Summary Care Record (SCR) to support patient care. It contains key information from your GP record. Your SCR provides authorised healthcare staff with faster, secure access to essential information about you in an emergency or when you need unplanned care, where such information would otherwise be unavailable.

Summary Care Records are there to improve the safety and quality of your care. SCR core (default) information comprises your allergies, adverse reactions and medications. An SCR with additional information can also include reason for medication, vaccinations, significant diagnoses/problems, significant procedures, anticipatory care information and end of life care information. Additional information can only be added to your SCR with your agreement.

Please be aware that if you choose to opt-out of SCR, NHS healthcare staff caring for you outside of this surgery may not be aware of your current medications, allergies you suffer from and any bad reactions to medicines you have had, in order to treat you safely in an emergency. Your records will stay as they are now with information being shared by letter, email, fax or phone. If you wish to opt-out of having an SCR please return a completed opt-out form to the practice.

Supporting Medicines Management

Frimley CCG operates pharmacist and prescribing advice services to support local GP practices with prescribing queries, which may require identifiable information to be shared. These pharmacists work with your usual GP to provide advice on medicines and prescribing queries, and review prescribing of medicines to ensure that it is appropriate for your needs, safe and cost-effective. Where specialist prescribing support is required, the CCG medicines optimisation team may order medications on behalf of your GP Practice to support your care.

Supporting Locally Commissioned Services

CCGs support GP practices by auditing anonymised data to monitor locally commissioned services, measure prevalence and support data quality. The data does not include identifiable information and is used to support patient care and ensure providers are correctly paid for the services they provide.

Data Retention

We manage patient records in line with the Records Management NHS Code of Practice for Health and Social Care which sets the required standards of practice in the management of records for those who work within or under contract to NHS organisations in England, based on current legal requirements and professional best practice.

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:

- Integrated Care Systems (ICS – Frimley Health and Care – see https://regisa.uk/index.php for information on the regional health and social care information sharing agreement.)
- NHS Trusts
- Specialist Trusts
- GP Federations
- 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' such as text messaging handlers or clinical IT system providers.
- OpenSAFELY COVID-19 and Data Analytics Services (see Annex A)

We will never share your information outside of health partner organisations without your explicit consent unless there are exceptional circumstances such as when the health or safety of others is at risk, where the law requires it or to carry out a statutory function.

Within the health partner organisations (NHS and Specialist Trusts) and in relation to the above mentioned themes – Risk Stratification, Invoice Validation, Supporting Medicines Management, Summary Care Record – we will assume you are happy for your information to be shared unless you choose to opt-out (see below).

This means you will need to express an explicit wish to not have your information shared with the other organisations; otherwise it will be automatically shared. 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. There are occasions when we must pass on information, such as notification of new births, where we encounter infectious diseases which may endanger the safety of others, such as meningitis or measles (but not HIV/AIDS), and where a formal court order has been issued. Our guiding principle is that we are holding your records in strictest confidence.

Your right to withdraw consent for us to share your personal information (Opt-Out)

If you are happy for your data to be extracted and used for the purposes described in this privacy notice then you do not need to do anything. If you do not want your information to be used for any purpose beyond providing your care you can choose to opt-out. If you wish to do so, please let us know so we can code your record appropriately. We will respect your decision if you do not wish your information to be used for any purpose other than your care but in some circumstances we may still be legally required to

disclose your data. There is more information here: Opt out of sharing your health records - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Access to your information

Under Data Protection Legislation everybody has the right to see, or have a copy, of data we hold that can identify them, with some exceptions. You do not need to give a reason to see your data. Under special circumstances, some information may be withheld. We may charge a reasonable fee for the administration of the request.

If you wish to have a copy of the information we hold about you, please contact the practice.

Change of Details

It is important that you tell the person treating you if any of your details such as your name or address have changed or if any of your details are incorrect in order for this to be amended. Please inform us of any changes so our records for you are accurate and up to date.

Mobile telephone number

If you provide us with your mobile phone number we may use this to send you reminders about your appointments or other health screening information. Please let us know if you do not wish to receive reminders on your mobile.

Notification

Data Protection Legislation requires organisations to register a notification with the Information Commissioner to describe the purposes for which they process personal and sensitive information.

We are registered as a Data Controller and our registration can be viewed online in the public register at: http://ico.org.uk/what_we_cover/register_of_data_controllers

Any changes to this notice will be published on our website and in a prominent area at the Practice.

Complaints

If you have concerns or are unhappy about any of our services, please contact the Practice Manager.

For independent advice about data protection, privacy and data-sharing issues, you can contact:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Phone: 0303 123 1113 Website: www.ico.gov.uk

Further Information

Further information about the way in which the NHS uses personal information and your rights in that respect can be found here:

The NHS Constitution

The NHS Constitution establishes the principles and values of the NHS in England. It sets out the rights patients, the public and staff are entitled to. These rights cover how patients access health services, the quality of care you'll receive, the treatments and programmes available to you, confidentiality, information and your right to complain if things go wrong.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england

NHS Digital

NHS Digital collects health information from the records health and social care providers keep about the care and treatment they give, to promote health or support improvements in the delivery of care services in England.

Collecting GP data - advice for the public - NHS Digital

List of non-NHS organisations which handle data on our behalf:

AccuRx – used to process text messages to patients.

myGPConnect – used to process batch text messages and appointment reminders to patients. eConsult

– information is provided by patients and sent to us.

Abtrace - used for our recall and care optmisation

InHealth – Lung Screening Programme (see ANNEX B)

Their own privacy notices are available on their websites.

Reviews of and Changes to our Privacy Notice

We will keep our privacy notice under regular review.

ANNEX A

NHS England has been directed by the government to establish and operate the OpenSAFELY COVID-19 Service and the OpenSAFELY Data Analytics Service. These services provide a secure environment that supports research, clinical audit, service evaluation and health surveillance for COVID-19 and other purposes.

Each GP practice remains the controller of its own GP patient data but is required to let approved users run queries on pseudonymised patient data. This means identifiers are removed and replaced with a pseudonym.

Only approved users are allowed to run these queries, and they will not be able to access information that directly or indirectly identifies individuals.

Legal Basis –
UK GDPR – Article 6 basis:
UK GDPR Article 6(1)(c) - processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject (the Directions).
UK GDPR Article 9 basis:
UK GDPR Article 9(2)(g) - processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest, on the basis of domestic law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject, by virtue of compliance with a direction supplemented by:

Patients who do not wish for their data to be used as part of this process can register a type 1 opt out with their

GP.
Here you can find additional information about OpenSAFELY

ANNEX B

Purpose: Lung Screening Programme is a programme aimed to identify lung cancers at an earlier stage, which evidence shows deliver much better outcomes where they have identified earlier. This GP practice has agreed to securely share information relating to its patients which meet the inclusion criteria with Inhealth to invite patients to participate in the Lung Screen Programme.

Legal Basis:
Article 6(1)e "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"

Article 9(2)h "processing is necessary for the purposes of preventive or occupational medicine, for the assessment of the working capacity of the employee, medical diagnosis, the provision of health or social care or treatment or the management of health or social care systems and services"

Other Data Controllers;
NHS England
Surrey & Sussex NHS Cancer Alliance
InHealth

Processor(s) :
Heart and Lung
InHealth
iMail
MMG
CIMAR UK Limited
Synapps Solutions Ltd