

# Your NHS health records

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We collect and keep information about you so we can offer you the care and treatment you need.

We will use the personal information in your NHS health records to improve your health and wellbeing while respecting your rights and privacy.

We will share only as much information as people need to know to play their part in your care. Wherever possible, we will ask you for your permission to do this.



## What information do you keep in my health records and why?

We have a duty to keep complete, accurate and up-to-date records of your care. This is so we can look after you safely and effectively.

The information we keep about you includes:

- basic details, such as your name, address and next of kin
- when we have seen you, such as clinic visits and hospital stays
- notes and reports about your health, and any treatment and care you need or receive
- results of investigations, such as x-rays, scans and laboratory tests
- relevant information from other health professionals, relatives or those who care for you and know you well.

This helps us to make sure that you get the best possible care from us. We may hold your health records on a computer, on paper or a mixture of the two.

The people caring for you use your information to:

- give you care and treatment
- check the quality of your care
- make safe decisions about your care
- investigate incidents and complaints.

If your information is used to plan and improve NHS services, treatment safety and effectiveness, training, education and research, we remove your name and other details which could identify you.

We will ask you first if we need the information in a form that identifies you.

**You have the right to refuse to let us use your information in this way. Your decision will not affect your care**



## **Will you share information with my family and carer?**

It is important that we know which family members or friends to involve in your care and who we can share your information with. This person does not need to be related to you but they should be able to tell us your wishes in case you are unable to do so yourself. We will share information with your carer or family if you agree we can.

## **Who needs to see my health records and why?**

The people caring for you need to share some of the information about you with others involved in your care. This includes your GP, other hospital specialists, nurses and health visitors. We will share only the information that they need to make your care and treatment safer, easier and faster.

Some of the information about the care you are getting from King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust may need to be shared with other clinicians within King's Health Partners, so you get the best care and treatment. For example, a heart specialist may need to know about medication you were prescribed for depression to offer you the safest treatment. If you have any concerns about this, please talk to your care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) (see page 7).

## **What is King's Health Partners?**

King's Health Partners (KHP) is one of only six Department of Health-designated Academic Health Sciences Centres in England. We are a group of organisations that provides physical and mental healthcare and carries out health-related research. We also educate healthcare professionals. Our partnership brings together three successful NHS Foundation Trusts and a world-leading university.



## How can I stop my information from being shared?

**If you do not want us to share your information with your GP, other healthcare providers or carers, please tell your care team.** But please note that not sharing your information may affect the care you get.

When the information is not about your health but about other things such as housing or education, we cannot share your information without you agreeing that we can, unless:

- it is in the public interest – for example, there is a risk of death or serious harm
- there is a legal need to share it – for example, to protect a child under the Children Act
- a court order tells us that we must share it
- there is a legitimate enquiry from the police under the Data Protection Act (1998) for information related to a serious crime.

## How can I see my own NHS health records?

The Data Protection Act (1998) gives you the right to see or get a copy of your health records:

- If you are a current patient at the Trust you can ask to see your NHS health records by talking to a member of your care team.
- If you have previously been a patient at the Trust, fill in the **Access to Health Records** form and return this to our Subject Access Team. You can get the form from the PALS office (see page 7) or download it from the Trust website: **[www.kch.nhs.uk](http://www.kch.nhs.uk)**

Other people can also apply for access. These include anyone authorised by you in writing (such as a solicitor), or any person appointed by a court to manage your affairs if it decides you cannot manage them.



The law says that your records should be made available to you within 40 days of the Subject Access Team in the Patient Records Service receiving your application. You will then be given a copy of your NHS health records or an appointment to see them at one of our sites.

The Trust charges £50 to supply a copy of your records, but there is no charge if you view them at one of our sites. For more information, please read the **Guidance Notes for Access to Records** on our website: [www.kch.nhs.uk](http://www.kch.nhs.uk)

As a general rule, a parent or guardian of a child under 16 has the right to apply for their child's medical records. But there are occasions when the consent of the child may be needed if that child is considered capable of making decisions about their medical treatment.

We may refuse to let you see some or all of your health records for certain reasons, such as:

- if a healthcare professional thinks the information would cause serious harm to your mental or physical health or that of any other person
- if giving access would let you see information about, or supplied by, a third person without their permission.

## How can I see the NHS health records of someone who has died?

The Access to Health Records Act (1990) gives you the right to get a copy of the health records of a deceased person, if you are:

- a personal representative of the deceased, or
- an executor of the deceased's estate, or
- someone who has a claim resulting from the death (this could be a relative or another person).



If you fall into one of these categories, fill in the **Access to Health Records** form and return this to our Subject Access Team. You can get the form from the PALS office (see page 7) or download it from the Trust website: [www.kch.nhs.uk](http://www.kch.nhs.uk). Please note that our Subject Access Team may contact you after receiving your request to check that you are eligible to receive the health records.

## How do I update the personal information you have about me?

If you change your name, address or phone number, your NHS health records need to be updated so we can continue to offer you our services. Please let your clinical team know about these changes.

If you have decided to limit how we share your information, tell us if you change your mind. We will always try to give you the best possible care, but limiting the information we can share may make it more difficult.

Only let others – such as insurers, mortgage lenders, employers, solicitors – look at your NHS records if you are sure it is necessary. Think carefully about who you give access to and why. Try to let them see only what they need to know and no more.

## What if I want to complain?

If you think that information in your NHS health records is wrong, please talk to the health professional looking after you and ask to have the record changed. You can also ask for the information to be amended by contacting the Subject Access Team (see page 7). If we turn down your request to have your records amended because the information is not wrong, we will add a statement of your views to the record.

If you are still unhappy with the outcome, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which regulates and enforces the Data Protection Act. For details of how to do this:



- visit the ICO website, <http://ico.org.uk>
- tel **0303 123 1113**

## Who can I contact for more information?

Please talk to the care team looking after you if you want to know more about how we use your health records or if you do not want your information used in any of the ways we describe in this leaflet.

## Subject Access Team, Patient Records Service

- If you were previously treated at King's College Hospital, tel: **020 3299 3559**
- If you were previously treated at Princess Royal University or Orpington hospitals, tel: **020 8302 2678**, ext **3233** or **4512**

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Fax: **020 3299 3626**

Email: [kch-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.pals@nhs.net)

You can also contact us by using our online form at

[www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals](http://www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals)

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND

Tel: **01689 863252**

Email: [kch-tr.palskent@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.palskent@nhs.net)



If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 184.

[www.kch.nhs.uk](http://www.kch.nhs.uk)  
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King's College Hospital is part of King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre (ASHC), a pioneering collaboration between King's College London, and Guy's and St.Thomas', King's College Hospital and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trusts.

For more information, visit [www.kingshealthpartners.org](http://www.kingshealthpartners.org) 