

# University College London Hospitals

## How we use your information

What you need to know



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## Introduction

This leaflet explains

- Why UCLH collect your personal information
- How we use it
- How we keep it confidential
- Your right to see your health records

## Why we collect information about you

To provide you with the highest quality health care we need to keep records about your health and any treatment and care you receive from the NHS. They could be on paper (manual) or held on computer. These may include:

- Basic details about you, such as name, address, date of birth, NHS number, gender, ethnicity and next of kin
- Contact we have had with you such as clinic visits
- Notes and reports about your health
- Details and records about your treatment and care
- Results of investigations, X-rays, laboratory tests, etc
- Relevant information from health professionals, relatives or those who care for you

## What we use your information for

Your records are used to guide and administer the care you receive to ensure that:

- The doctor, nurse or other healthcare professional involved in your care has accurate and up to date information to

assess your health and decide the most appropriate care for you

- Full information is available about you should we need to share your information with another doctor or you need to be referred to a specialist or another part of the NHS
- We have an accurate record if we need to review your care
- Your concerns can be properly investigated if a complaint is raised
- We can teach and train the next generation of healthcare professionals
- Allow us to develop and provide services to meet the different needs of patients

It is important that the information we hold about you is accurate and complete. If your details change, please tell us.

## **How your information is used to help the NHS**

Your information may also be used to help us:

- Look after the health of the general public
- Pay your GP, dentist and hospital for the care they provide
- Investigate complaints, legal claims or untoward incidents
- Make sure our services can meet patient needs in the future
- Prepare statistics on NHS performance and activity
- To audit accounts, systems and procedures
- Review the care we provide to ensure it is of the highest standard
- Undertake patient surveys to obtain valuable feedback
- Conduct health research and development

## **Keeping your information confidential**

Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to keep your information confidential and UCLH strictly controls the passing of information to people not directly involved in your treatment.

When information is shared, it is passed securely and kept confidential by the people who receive it.

## **Consent**

The NHS operates under the notion of 'implied consent' when it collects and shares data directly related to your healthcare. For example, when your GP refers you to one of our hospitals or you attend A&E (Emergency Department) we can assume you are happy for us to collect and manage your personal information to provide you with treatment.

UCLH is a complex organisation and in order for your doctor or healthcare professional to provide you with a service, a large team of professionals may have to be involved. These may include nurses, lab technicians and technical staff (supporting medical or administrative systems).

We may also involve other healthcare professionals at other hospitals or services. If your information is used for other purposes, such as research, clinical trials or our work with affiliated charities, we will seek your consent.

## Who might we share your information with?

With your consent, information can be shared with relatives, partners or friends who act or care for you.

To make sure you receive all the care and treatment you need, we might share relevant information about you with other organisations so we can all work together for your benefit to give you the support and care you need. They may include:

- Your GP, dentist and pharmacies
- Ambulance Services
- NHS walk-in centres
- Out of hours doctors services
- Community services such as nurses, midwives and therapists
- Private hospitals, care homes and hospices

We may also share your information, subject to strict agreement about how it will be used with:

- Adult or children services
- Education services
- Local Authorities
- Voluntary sector providers working with the NHS
- When a serious crime has been committed
- When there are serious risks to the public or NHS staff
- To protect children
- Third party suppliers, including suppliers located outside the European Economic Area (EEA).

In some circumstances your data may be transferred to third party suppliers outside of the EEA. Sending data to third party suppliers outside of the EEA is only ever carried out in connection with your care. We make sure that this is done in compliance with the Data Protection Act\*. No personal data will be transferred outside the EEA for any other purposes, eg, research or education, without your explicit consent.

There may be times when we are required by law to report certain information to the appropriate authorities. Occasions when we must pass on information include:

- Notification of births and deaths
- Where we encounter infectious diseases that may endanger the safety of others, such as tuberculosis, meningitis or measles (but **not** HIV/AIDS)
- Reporting gunshot wounds and violent assault to the police
- Where a formal court order has been issued

Anyone who receives information from us also has a legal duty to maintain confidentiality.

## Research

All research we undertake is approved by an independent Research Ethics Committee and by our Research and Development (R&D) department. We will ordinarily seek your permission before using information that could identify you for research purposes.

You have our commitment that we will use your records in ways that respect your rights and promotes your health and

wellbeing. If we intend to share your information in a form that identifies you outside your direct care team, we will ask your permission first.

In some specific circumstances we may seek consent from the Secretary of State for Health via the Health Research Authority (HRA) to either conduct research or carry out other NHS functions without your informed consent. This is usually in respect of large scale research in the public interest. All parties maintain a strict duty of confidence and are subject to enhanced security controls in these circumstances.

## **Charities**

Our charities provide important support to the work of UCLH, by supporting major projects and providing benefits to patients not covered by NHS funding.

Limited contact information, for example, name, address etc, may be shared with charities which are affiliated with UCLH NHS Foundation Trust. These charities support our work by donating equipment and paying for additional facilities and amenities. The list of affiliated charities is available on request or on our website. If you do not want us to share your information in this way, please contact the Information Governance team, who will provide you with further guidance.

## **Membership**

UCLH is a Foundation Trust and is therefore governed by its members. A separate membership database is maintained by UCLH specifically for this purpose. For further details about membership and related services please refer to our website

listed at the end of the booklet.

## Your medical records

You can ask the doctor, nurse or healthcare professional looking after you if you wish to see information held about you regarding the current care or treatment you are receiving.

If you want full disclosure of your medical records you may wish to make a formal application under the Data Protection Act 1998. The Act gives you the right to access the information we hold about you on our records. You do not have to give a reason for your request. You have the right to:

- Ask for a copy of all records about you held in paper or electronic form (a fee may apply)
- Choose someone to make decisions about your healthcare if you become unable to do so (this is called 'a lasting power of attorney')

UCLH is obliged to:

- Maintain full and accurate records of the care we provide you
- Keep records about you confidential, secure and accurate
- Provide information in a format that is accessible to you (for example in large type if you are partially sighted)

To access your medical records follow the procedures below:

- Your request must be made in writing to the relevant medical records department (addresses on page 13 and 14). You can also complete an online form to access your medical records. Details of addresses and links are listed

at the end of the booklet

- For information from another hospital or your GP you should contact them directly
- You will need to give adequate information (for example full name, address, date of birth, contact number, etc) so that your identity can be verified and your records located
- You will need to supply us with proof of your identity. For example, a current passport, EU driving licence, or a recent utility bill
- We aim to respond promptly and are required to do so within 40 calendar days of receiving your request

We will normally be able to provide you with a copy of your records. However, we may partially restrict disclosure of information where:

- The health professional in charge of your care believes it may be mentally or physically harmful to you or another person to see certain contents of your records
- By providing access, we would reveal information which relates to and identifies another person unless that person has given consent. This would not usually include health professionals

We would normally be able to provide your records with any such information removed and we would usually inform you if this is the case. If you think any of the information is inaccurate or incomplete, please let us know.

Other people who you authorise in writing can also apply on your behalf to access your medical records. This includes a legal representative (eg a solicitor) or any person appointed

by a court to manage your affairs (if the court decides you are unable to manage your own affairs). If you are a parent or guardian of a child under 16, you can ask to see their medical records in the same way, if this is in the child's best interest. If your child is old enough to make a decision about this, you may not be able to see their records without their consent.

## Retention of records

We are required to keep confidential records of your care and treatment for a certain period of time.

The usual retention period is eight years. This can vary on the type of record for example:

- Adults 8 years after conclusion of treatment or death
- Children and young people retain until patient's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday or 26<sup>th</sup> if person was 17 at the conclusion of treatment or 8 years after death
- Maternity records 25 years after the birth of the last child (even if the last birth was a stillbirth)
- Oncology, including radiotherapy 30 years (8 for deceased patients)

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

The service has been set up to help patients and their relatives and carers find a speedy and effective solution to any problems they may encounter. PALS offer the following:

- A patient friendly, easy to access, confidential service designed to provide a personal contact to assist patients, relatives and carers

- On the spot advice and information if you have queries or difficulties
- Listen to your concerns and help you find ways of resolving them
- To take note of what you tell us to help improve the service our hospitals offer to patients
- A point of contact for all those wishing to get advice and information about the hospitals' services

## **Faith**

The Chaplains are a multi-faith/multi-denominational team offering spiritual and pastoral care to all patients, staff and visitors throughout University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. If you would like to see a chaplain during your stay, please ask the ward staff to contact the appropriate chaplain for you. Everyone is welcome to use the Hospitals' chapels.

Unless you ask us not to, we will inform the appropriate authorised hospital chaplain/faith representative about your religious affiliation.

## **Further information**

If you would like more information please speak to the health professional caring for you. You can also contact the relevant department, details are at the end of this booklet.

If you would like to express appreciation or make a suggestion, please contact the person in charge of the ward, clinic or department. You can also use UCLH feedback and comment cards available on wards and departments.

If you are not satisfied with your hospital experience please speak to the person in charge of the ward or clinic. You can also speak to our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who will be able to help you with your problem quickly and informally.

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please write with full details to UCLH's Complaints Officer. Details can be found on our website.

\* An approved country with adequate privacy laws or where adequate contractual and procedural arrangements are in place.

## Information Governance

If you have any queries about the way we use your information please contact:

Information Governance Team  
UCL Hospitals Foundation Trust  
235 Euston Road  
London, NW1 2BU  
Tel No: 020 3447 5798 Ext 75798

## Contact details

### **University College Hospital, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Westmoreland Street**

Medico-Legal Department  
Medical Records  
UCLH NHS Foundation Trust  
C/O Ground Floor, Rosenheim Wing  
Grafton Way  
London, WC1E 6DB  
Tel No: 020 3447 7964

### **National Hospital for Neurology & Neurosurgery**

NHNN Medical Records  
Box 43, Ground Floor  
Royal London Hospital for Integrated Medicine  
60 Great Ormond Street  
London, WC1N 3HR  
Tel No: 020 3456 7890

**Eastman Dental Hospital**

Medical Records Department

Eastman Dental Hospital

256 Gray's Inn Road

London, WC1 8LD

Main Switchboard Tel No: 020 3456 7899

**The Royal London Hospital for Integrated Medicine**

Medical Records Department

The Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital

Great Ormond Street

London, WC1N 3HR

Main Switchboard Tel No: 0845 155 5000 or  
020 3456 7890

**Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital**

Medical Records Department

330 Gray's Inn Road

London, WC1X 8DA

Main Switchboard Tel No: 020 7915 1300

**UCLH Website**

<http://www.uclh.nhs.uk>

**If you would like this document in another language or format, or require the services of an interpreter, contact us on the main switchboard number 0845 155 5000. We will do our best to meet your needs.**



## Space for notes and questions

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We are committed to  
delivering top-quality patient  
care, excellent education  
and world class research

**Safety**  
**Kindness**  
**Teamwork**  
**Improving**