

Confidentiality statement

Berkshire Healthcare will only use information given to us in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

We have a legal duty to keep all information supplied by service users confidential. As a confidential service we will ask service users for permission if we must contact other agencies, except where there are significant issues of risk such as child protection issues or harm to self or others.

Anyone who receives information from us is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential.

How you can get access to your own health records

The Data Protection Act 1998 allows you to find out what information about you is held in our records. This applies to both manual and computer processed records. This is known as "rights of subject access".

If you want to see your health records you should make a written request to the NHS organisation where you are being treated, or have been treated. You are entitled to receive a copy but you should note that a charge will usually be made.

Sharing information about you

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Information for service users

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is committed to the eight principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Contact the Data Protection Officer: Fitzwilliam House (Head Office), Skimped Hill Lane, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1BQ.

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01344 415600 (main switchboard)

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www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk

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Why we share information about you?

We want to make sure that your treatment is as safe and effective as possible for you, your family and the whole community. To do this, we may need to make contact with your doctor and other health professionals who keep records about your health and any treatment and care you receive from the NHS.

The records may include:

- Basic details about you such as address and next of kin
- Contacts we have had with you, such as clinic visits
- Notes and reports about your health and any treatment and care you receive
- Results of investigations, such as x-rays and laboratory tests
- Relevant information from other health professionals, relatives or those who care for you and know you well

How your records are used to help you and your family

We will contact your GP to make sure that the treatment we are offering does not interfere with any other treatment you are receiving in a way which could lead to harm.

We may at times recommend that you talk to someone else, such as a psychologist, who we think may be able to help you. In such cases we would normally send information about you to them, but you have the right to discuss and receive a copy of the paperwork sent.

If you have contact with children, it is our duty to make sure that they are kept safe from any form of harm. This is a routine precaution which we will discuss with you. It will only lead to further action if there is evidence that the children could be at risk of coming to harm.

Sometimes we hear information which makes us think that there may be a risk of harm to someone else. When this happens we will take action intended to keep everyone safe.

This may include sharing information with other organisations such as the emergency services or the mental health crisis team. We will try to discuss this with you and get your consent to go ahead. In some emergencies it may not be possible to speak to you.

How your information is used by the NHS

Information you provide may also be used to manage and plan the NHS. In order to measure and improve services throughout the country, we collate data about our service-users. We never include your name in this information.

Your information may also be used for purposes of clinical audit or research, and this again will be anonymised. Any involvement in specific research studies would be with your consent.

Clinical information may be used for the training and education of staff as well as investigating any complaints or legal claims. If you would like to know what kind of information we provide, and why it is so useful please ask.

We will always try to give you every possible opportunity to become involved in how information about you is handled. If you have any questions on this, your key-worker will be pleased to help.

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