

YOUR INFORMATION



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

This leaflet has been compiled by Forestside Medical Practice who treat and care for its patients within the New Forest community area. We hope that everyone who is registered within the practice will have a clear and consistent advice about how we use and safeguard your information.

Why we collect information about you

Your doctor and other health professionals caring for you keep records about your health and any treatment and care you receive from the practice or within the National Health Service. These help to ensure that you receive the best possible care from us. They may be written down (manual records), or held on a computer. 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 have received
- Details and records about the treatment and care you receive
- Results and investigations, such as x-rays and laboratory tests
- Relevant information from other health care professionals, or those who care for you and know you well

How your records are used to help you

Your records are used to guide professionals in the care you receive to ensure that:

- Your doctor, nurse or any other healthcare professionals involved in your care has accurate and up-to-date information to assess your health and decide what care you need
- Full information is available if you see another doctor, or if you are referred to a specialist or another part of the NHS
- There is a good basis for assessing the type and quality of care you have received
- Your concerns can be properly investigated if you need to complain

How your records are used to help the Practice and NHS

Your information may also be used to help us:

- Assess the needs of the practice population
- Make sure our services can meet patient needs in the future
- Review the care we provide to ensure it is of the highest standard
- Teach and train healthcare professionals
- Conduct health research and development
- Audit care provided to meet NHS-Government targets
- Investigate complaints, legal claims or untoward incidents

Although this information is held within practice, some information will be held centrally, but where information is used for statistical purposes stringent measures are taken to ensure that individual patients cannot be identified. Anonymised data is passed to NHS organisations with a legitimate interest.

Where it is not possible to use anonymised information, personally identifiable information may be used for essential purposes, which may include research and auditing services. This will only be done with your consent, unless the law requires information to be passed on to improve public health.

How we keep your records confidential

Everyone working within the practice has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential

You may be receiving care from other organisations as well as NHS (like social services). We may need to share some information about you so we can all work together for your benefit. We will only ever use or pass on information about you if others involved in your care have a genuine need for it.

We will not disclose your information to third parties without your permission unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as when the health and safety of others is at risk or where the law requires information to be passed on.

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

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. Occasions when we must pass on information include:

- 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)
- Where a formal court order has been issued.

Our practice policy is that we are holding your records in strict confidence

Who are our partner organisations?

The principle partner organisations, with which information may be shared is:

- Other GP practices
- District Nursing and Health Visiting
- Health Authorities
- NHS Trusts
- Ambulance Services

Your information may also, subject to strict agreements describing how it will be used, be shared with:

- Primary care agencies
- Social services
- Education Services
- Local Authorities
- Voluntary Sector Providers
- Private sector Providers

How you can get access to your own health records

The Data Protection Act 1998, which came into force on the 1st March 2000, allows you to find out what information about you is held on the computer and in certain manual records. This is known as “right of subject access” It applies to your health records.

If you want to see them you should make a written request to the registered doctor who has been treating you. You are entitled to a copy of certain information but should note that a charge will usually be made. You should also be aware that in certain circumstances your right to see some details in your health records may be limited in your own interest or for other reasons.

Further Information

Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact the surgery and ask to speak to the Practice Manager or Practice Administrator. Or check our website on **www.forestsidedmedicalpractice.co.uk**