

THE BRIDGES MEDICAL PRACTICE

PRIVACY NOTICE

Introduction

This document explains who we are, why information is collected about you, the ways in which this information may be used, who it is shared with and how we keep it safe. It also explains how the practice uses the information we hold about you, how you go about accessing this information if you wish to see it and to have any inaccuracies corrected or erased.

Who we are

The Bridges Medical Practice is a well-established GP surgery based in Weymouth. The Practice has 2 sites – one in the town centre and the other at Littlemoor. Our staff of General Practitioners and other Health Care Professionals provides primary medical care services to our practice population of over 16,000 patients and our administrative and managerial staff support the team in providing care for patients.

In relation to this notice The Bridges Medical Practice is the Data Controller of patient information. Our Data Protection Officer is Helen Williams / Emily Hutchings, NHS Dorset.

WHAT INFORMATION DO WE COLLECT FROM YOU?

GP Records are stored electronically and on paper and include personal details about you such as:

- Identity details – name, gender, sexual orientation (if relevant to your care), date of birth, NHS number
- Contact details – address, telephone, email address
- Next of kin details, the contact details of relatives or friends
- Details of any carer you may have or anyone you care for
- Any contact the surgery has had with you, such as appointments, clinic visits, emergency appointments and telephone calls
- Notes and reports about your health
- Details about your treatment and care
- Details about any medication you are taking
- Results of investigations such as laboratory tests, x-rays
- Relevant information from other health professionals, relatives or those who care for you

WHY DO WE COLLECT THIS INFORMATION?

Your records are used to ensure you receive the best possible care from our staff. It enables the staff to see previous treatments, medications and enables them to make informed decisions about future decisions about your care. It helps the clinicians to see lists of previous treatments and any special considerations which need to be taken into account when care is provided.

Important information is also collected to help us to remind you about specific treatment which you might need, such as health checks, or reminders for screening appointments such as cytology reminders.

Information held about you may be used to help protect the health of the public and to help us to improve NHS services. Information may be used within the GP practice for clinical audit to monitor the quality of the service provided.

Staff at the practice use your information to help deliver more effective treatment to you and to help us to provide you with proactive advice and guidance.

Access to information is strictly controlled and restricted to those who need it in order to do their jobs. All of our staff receive regular mandatory training on confidentiality and data security and also have strict contractual clauses within their employment contracts which oblige them to respect data protection and confidentiality.

Recorded telephone calls

We record all incoming and outgoing telephone calls to and from the Practice for the following purposes:

- to help with staff training
- to enable us to obtain the necessary facts in the event of a complaint
- for medico-legal purposes; and
- for quality assurance to allow us to audit and improve our service to you.

Recordings of telephone calls will only be accessed where necessary by the Practice Management Team. Recordings are stored in accordance with the Records Management Code of Practice for Health and Social Care 2016 Retention Schedule, after which they are deleted.

SMS communications

If you have provided us with your mobile telephone number, we may use this to send you SMS messages relating to your healthcare. These may include automatic appointment reminders or cancellations, reminders of clinics, invitations to screening, medication reviews, vaccination appointments, requests to complete surveys or to make you aware of services provided by the surgery that we feel will be to your

benefit, or to update you about local and national health promotions. If you do not wish to receive these messages, please let the reception team know.

Please note that the data protection and electronic communication laws do not stop us from sending public health messages to you, either by phone, text or email, as these messages are not direct marketing.

WHO MIGHT WE SHARE YOUR INFORMATION WITH?

We work with a number of Health and Social care organisations and independent treatment centres in order to provide you with the best possible care and options for treatment. Your information may therefore be shared securely to provide continuity of care.

There are a number of ways information collected about you is shared, which includes:

1. Patient referrals

With your agreement, we may refer you to other services and healthcare providers not provided by the practice, or they may work with other services to provide your care in the practice. Once you have been seen for your referral, the other health care provider will normally tell us about the treatment they have provided for you and any follow up which we need to provide. This information is then included in your GP record.

2. Local Hospital, Community or Social Care Services

Sometimes the clinicians caring for you need to share some of your information with others who are also supporting you. This could include hospital or community-based specialists, nurses, health visitors, therapists, district nurses or social care services.

For example, if you attend the Urgent Treatment Centre at Weymouth Community Hospital then, with your consent, they are able to view and add to your GP record.

3. Summary Care Record (SCR)

A Summary Care Record is an electronic record of important patient information, created from the GP medical records. It contains information about medication you are taking, any allergies you suffer from and any bad reactions to medications you have previously had. It can be seen and used by authorised staff in other areas of the health and care system involved in your direct care. Giving healthcare staff access to this information can prevent mistakes being made when caring for you in an emergency or when your GP practice is closed. Your Summary Care Record also includes your name, address, date of birth and your unique NHS Number to help identify you correctly.

If you and your GP decide to include more information it can be added to the Summary Care Record, but only with your express permission. For more information visit <https://digital.nhs.uk/summary-care-records/patients>

4. National Services

There are some national services like the National Cancer Screening Programme that collect and keep information from across the NHS. This is how the NHS knows when to contact you about services like cervical, breast or bowel cancer screening. Often you have the right to not allow these organisations to have your information.

You can find out more about how the NHS holds and shares your information for national programmes on the NHS Choices website.

5. Primary Care Networks

Primary Care Networks (PCNs) are groups of GP Practices working closely together with their local partners (e.g. other primary and community care staff, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services for the benefit of patients and the local community). Our Practice is part of Weymouth and Portland PCN, alongside Cross Road Surgery, Dorchester Road Surgery, Royal Crescent and Preston Road Surgery, Royal Manor Health Centre and Wyke Regis Health Centre.

Working as part of a network rather than a stand-alone business means that the GP Practices in our PCN can share expertise and resources which means that we can offer a wide range of services to suit the needs of our local community to give you the best possible care. You may be seen by clinicians from anywhere in our PCN, at any of our Practices. In order that they can give you the best possible care, they will have access to your health data. Only healthcare staff involved in your care will have access to your record. If you do not want your records to be shared with the PCN then please let us know.

6. Dorset Care Record (DCR)

Health and social care organisations in Dorset may hold different sets of records about you, and not every organisation uses the same system. The Dorset Care Record is a confidential computer record that joins up all these different records to create one complete and up to-date record. Sharing appropriate information electronically to a single place, offers direct access for authorised health and social care professionals to provide as full a picture as possible of your history, needs, support and service contacts.

If you do not wish your information to be shared in this way, you will need to opt-out of the Dorset Care Record. You can do this by contacting the Privacy Officer on the [DCR website](#). The Dorset Care Record have their own Privacy Notice, available on the website.

7. Diabetic Eye Screening

The Dorset Diabetic Eye Screening Programme is provided by NEC Care, commissioned by NHS England South (Wessex) as part of the National Diabetic Eye Screening Programme. We share information with NEC Care to provide diabetic retinopathy screen for our diabetic patients.

You can find out more about the Diabetic Eye Screening at [NEC Care - Diabetic Eye Screening \(necsws.com\)](https://necsws.com)

8. Social Prescribing

Social prescribing enables GPs, nurses and other primary care professionals to refer patients to a range of local, non-clinical community services to help patients to improve their health, wellbeing and social welfare. This can include advice and information on local services and connecting individuals to social activities, clubs, groups, and like-minded individuals in the community. For example, signposting people who have been diagnosed with dementia to local dementia support groups. The Practice will do this by employing someone to act as a 'link' between the Practice, the patient and the non-clinical services within the community.

Current providers in our area include: · Livewell Dorset · Home Start West Dorset · Help and Care

9. Diabetes Prevention Programme

The Healthier You: NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme is provided in Dorset by 'Live Well Taking Control (LWTC)', commissioned by NHS England, as part of the National Diabetes Prevention Programme. This programme identifies those at high risk of Type 2 diabetes and refers them onto a behaviour change programme run by 'Live Well Taking Control'. You can find out more about the Diabetes Prevention Programme on their website.

10. Dorset Integrated Care System (ICS)

Dorset's integrated care system, known locally as 'Our Dorset' is a partnership of local organisations working together to improve services to meet the needs of local people and deliver better outcomes. The partnership includes:

- NHS Dorset;
- Foundation Trusts: Dorset County Hospital, Poole Hospital, The Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals, Dorset Healthcare University and South Western Ambulance Service
- Bournemouth Borough Council, Borough of Poole Council and Dorset County Council

- Public Health Dorset.

11. ACR project for patients with diabetes (and/or other conditions)

The data is being processed for the purpose of delivery of a programme, sponsored by NHS Digital, to monitor urine for indications of chronic kidney disease (CKD) which is recommended to be undertaken annually for patients at risk of chronic kidney disease e.g., patients living with diabetes. The programme enables patients to test their kidney function from home. We will share your contact details with Healthy.io to enable them to contact you and send you a test kit. This will help identify patients at risk of kidney disease and help us agree any early interventions that can be put in place for the benefit of your care. Healthy.io will only use your data for the purposes of delivering their service to you. If you do not wish to receive a home test kit from Healthy.io we will continue to manage your care within the Practice. Healthy.io are required to hold data we send them in line with retention periods outlined in the Records Management Code of Practice for Health and Social Care 2021. Further information about this project is available at: https://lp.healthy.io/minuteful_info/.

Risk Stratification: data tools are increasingly being used in the NHS to help determine a person's risk of suffering a particular condition, preventing an unplanned or (re)admission and identifying a need for preventive intervention. Information about you is collected from a number of sources including NHS Trusts and from this GP Practice. A risk score is then arrived at through an analysis of your de-identified information using software managed by NHS approved third parties and is only provided back to your GP as data controller in an identifiable form. Through the Dorset Intelligence & Insight Service (DiiS) we are working to improve short term and medium-term health outcomes for local populations through the application of Population Health Management and Analysis. The DiiS, set up and run by NHS staff across Dorset and hosted within Dorset HealthCare, pseudonymise at source and extract the data to analyse the use of services and identify areas for prevention and improvement in overall patient health and well-being outcomes. A small number of specialist analytics staff from NHS Trusts manage this data within the DiiS platform. In addition, the DiiS work with Sollis to provide risk stratification of this data which enables your GP to focus on preventing ill health and not just the treatment of sickness. If necessary, your GP may be able to offer you additional services including social prescribing.

12. OpenSAFELY

NHS England has been directed by the Government to establish and operate the OpenSAFELY service. This service provides a Trusted Research Environment that supports COVID-19 research and analysis. Each GP practice remains the controller of its own patient data but is required to let researchers run queries on pseudonymised patient data. This means identifiers are removed and replaced with

a pseudonym, through OpenSAFELY. Only researchers approved by NHS England are allowed to run these queries and they will not be able to access information that directly or indirectly identifies individuals. [More information about OpenSAFELY is available here.](#)

WHAT DO WE DO WITH YOUR INFORMATION?

The healthcare professionals who provide your care maintain records about your health. This is a record of your care history and allows health care professionals to review your care to help inform future decisions about your treatment. Sharing this information helps to improve the treatment you receive, such as a hospital consultant writing to your GP. We follow strict data sharing guidelines to keep your information safe and secure.

NATIONAL DATA OPT-OUT

Whenever you use a health or care service, important information about you is collected in your patient record for that service to ensure you get the best possible care and treatment. The information collected about you when you use these services can also be used and provided to other organisations for purposes beyond your individual care, for instance to help with:

- improving the quality and standards of care provided
- research into the development of new treatments
- preventing illness and diseases
- monitoring safety
- planning services

This may only take place when there is a clear legal basis to use this information. Confidential patient information about your health and care is only used like this where allowed by law. Most of the time, anonymised data is used for research and planning so that you cannot be identified in which case your confidential patient information isn't needed. You have a choice about whether you want your confidential patient information to be used in this way. If you are happy with this use of information you do not need to do anything. If you do choose to opt out your confidential patient information will still be used to support your individual care.

Patients can view or change their national data opt-out choice at any time by using the online service at www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters, or by calling 0300 3035678. Further information is available at: nhs.uk/information-about-patients (which covers health and care research), and [understanding patient data](#) (which covers how and why patient information is used, the safeguards and how decisions are made). Data being used or shared for purposes beyond individual care does not

include your data being shared with insurance companies or used for marketing purposes and data would only be used in this way with your specific agreement.

Our Practice is currently compliant with the national data opt-out policy which means that we have systems and processes in place to comply with the national data opt-out so that your choice can be applied to any confidential patient information we use or share for purposes beyond your individual care.

HOW LONG DO WE KEEP YOUR INFORMATION?

The Practice works to the NHS Records Management Code of Practice 2021 Retention Schedule.

HOW DO WE KEEP YOUR INFORMATION SAFE?

Every member of staff who works for an NHS organisation has a legal obligation to keep information about you confidential. We are committed to protecting your privacy and will only use information collected lawfully in accordance with:

- General Data Protection Regulation 2017
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Common Law Duty of Confidentiality
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- NHS Codes of Confidentiality, Information Security and Records Management
- Information: To Share or Not to Share Review

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 any third party without your permission unless there are exceptional circumstances such as a life or death situation, or where the law requires information to be passed, or where it is in the best interest of the patient to share the information.

In May 2018, a new national regulation called the General Data Protection Regulation came into force and the practice has a legal responsibility to ensure that we will also comply with these regulations.

YOUR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

The practice does not engage in any profiling or use any automated decision making tools without having human input.

- **ACCESSING INFORMATION**

You have a right under the Data Protection legislation to request access to obtain copies of all the information the surgery holds about you. You are also allowed to have information amended should it be inaccurate.

In order to access your medical record, you need to let the practice know by making a Subject Access Request (SAR).

The practice will respond to your request within one month of receipt of your request. You will need to give adequate information (for example full name, address, date of birth, NHS number and details of your request) so that your identity can be verified, and your records located. It will be very helpful to the practice if you could specify any particular information, you need so we can provide the information to you as soon as possible.

Usually there is no charge to see the information that the practice holds about you unless the request is excessive or complicated.

For information about your hospital medical records, you should write direct to them.

- **HAVE INACCURACIES CORRECTED**

If you feel that information held about you is incorrect, you have the right to ask for it to be corrected. This applies to matters of fact, not opinion. Incorrect contact information such as your address will be corrected immediately. If the information is of a clinical nature, this will need to be reviewed and investigated by the Practice, which will result in one of the following outcomes:

- the Practice considers the information to be correct at the time of recording and will not amend the data. A statement from you may be placed within the record to demonstrate that you disagree with the information held. You have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner
- the Practice agrees that the information is incorrect, however it is not legal to modify or remove information within the record as it represents 'historical information' which may have influenced subsequent events or decisions made. In these circumstances, a note will be made in the record which advises the reader of the inaccuracy and of the correct facts. The Practice will agree the content of the note with you.

- **RIGHT TO ERASURE**

This is sometimes known as 'the right to be forgotten', but it is not an absolute right. You cannot ask for this right of erasure in relation to records which the Practice is legally bound to retain.

- **DATA PORTABILITY**

This right only applies where the original processing is based on the data subject's consent or fulfilment of a contract that they are party to, and if the processing is automated. However, in the spirit of the Regulations, you have the right to request that your personal and/or healthcare information is transferred in an electronic or other form to another organisation.

- **RIGHT TO OBJECT**

As a patient, you have the right to object to personal data about you being used or shared.

You also have the right to restrict the use of data the practice holds about you. If you do wish to object, please contact the practice. This will prevent your confidential information being used other than where necessary by law.

If you are a carer and have a Lasting Power of Attorney for health and welfare, then you can also object to personal data being used or shared on behalf of the patient who lacks capacity.

If you do not hold a Lasting Power of Attorney, then you can raise your specific concerns with the patient's GP. If you have parental responsibility and your child is not able to make an informed decision for themselves, then you can make a decision about information sharing on behalf of your child. If your child is competent then this must be their decision.

A separate notice for under 16s is available.

Objections/Complaints

Should you have any concerns about how your information is managed at the practice, please contact Helen Carter, Deputy Practice Manager. The practice will listen to your concerns and try and act upon the concerns raised as best we are able. If you are still unhappy following a review by the GP practice, you can then complain to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) via their website [ICO](https://ico.org.uk).

Changes to Privacy Policy

We keep our privacy policy under regular review, and we will place any updates on this web page.

This privacy policy was last updated on 17 January 2024.