



# HEALTH MATTERS

## SPECIAL EDITION

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**England** care.data

**NHS England's care.data** programme is run by the Health Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC). The care.data system will allow data from a number of places (GP Practices, hospitals and community services) to be brought together.

Your date of birth, full postcode, NHS Number and gender rather than your name will be used to link your records in a secure system, managed by the HSCIC. Once this information has been linked, a new record will be created. This new record will not contain information that identifies you. The type of information shared, and how it is shared, is controlled by law and strict confidentiality rules.

Sharing information about the care you have received helps NHS England to understand the health needs of everyone and the quality of the treatment and care provided and reduce inequalities in the care provided. The new system will also provide information that will enable the public to hold the NHS to account and ensure that any unacceptable standards of care are identified as quickly as possible. Information will help to:

- find more effective ways of preventing, treating and managing illnesses
- make sure that any changes or improvements to services reflect the needs of the local patients
- understand who is most at risk of particular diseases and conditions, so those who can plan care can provide preventative services
- improve your understanding of the outcomes of care, giving you greater confidence in health and social care services
- identify who could be at risk of a condition or would benefit from a particular treatment
- make sure that the NHS organisations receive the correct payments for the services they provide
- improve the public's understanding of the outcomes of care, giving them confidence in health and care services
- guide decisions about how to manage NHS resources so that they can best support the treatment and management of illness for all patients

It is important you read the leaflet Better Information Means Better Care so you understand how information in medical records can be used to improve the way healthcare is delivered. The leaflet is available to read in our waiting rooms, on our website ([www.northlands-surgery.co.uk](http://www.northlands-surgery.co.uk)) and on the NHS Choices website ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)).

**If you are happy for your information to be used you do not need to do anything. But if you have concerns or if you do not want information that identifies you from being shared outside your GP practice, as described here, please ask for an opt-out form from Reception. A note will then be placed on your medical record which will prevent your information being used other than where necessary by law, such as in case of a public health emergency.**

You will also be able to restrict the use of information held by other places you receive care from. However, this will not affect the care you receive.

You can change your mind at any time and as many times as you wish; inform Reception who will record your wishes.

Information from GP practices will begin to be extracted and sent to the HSCIC in autumn 2014. The GP data will be linked with the hospital data already held by the HSCIC.

For more information about how data is collected and shared, including confidentiality, read the Q&A produced by the HSCIC and NHS England (available on their website) or call the dedicated patient information line in relation to data sharing on 0300 456 3531. Translation and text phone services are also available.

## SUMMARY CARE RECORD

**Summary Care Records** were introduced to improve the safety and quality of patient care. Because the Summary Care Record is an electronic record, it gives healthcare staff faster, easier access to essential information about you, and help to give you safe treatment during an emergency or when your GP surgery is closed.

A Summary Care Record is an electronic record that's stored at a central location. As the name suggests, the record does not contain detailed information about your medical history, but only contains important health information, such as:

- whether you're taking any prescription medication
- whether you have any allergies
- whether you've previously had a bad reaction to any medication

Access to your Summary Care Record is strictly controlled. The only people who can see the information are healthcare staff directly involved in your care who have a special smartcard and access number (like a chip-and-pin credit card).

Healthcare staff will ask your permission every time they need to look at your Summary Care Record. If they cannot ask you, e.g. because you're unconscious, healthcare staff may look at your record without asking you. If they have to do this, they will make a note on your record.

A Summary Care Record has been created for you, unless you chose to opt-out. You can choose to opt-out at any time by completing an opt-out form available from Reception. If you have previously opted-out and have decided you would like a Summary Care Record please hand a letter to Reception giving your authorisation to opt-in.

### Children and the Summary Care Record

Children automatically have a Summary Care Record made for them. If you do not want your child to have a Summary Care Record you will need to fill in an opt-out form on behalf of your child and return it to Reception. In some circumstances your GP may feel it is in your child's best interests to have a Summary Care Record. For example, if your child has a serious allergy that healthcare staff treating your child should know about.