

A photograph of a woman with her hair tied back, wearing a grey sweater over a white collared shirt, smiling and shaking hands with a person in a dark suit. The image is partially obscured by a large, dark teal graphic shape that frames the text.

Your health records and you



Your health records and you

This leaflet is for people who use our services. It explains why we need to record your information, how we store it and whom we might share it with.

Caring for you

To make sure you get the best possible care, we need to record information about you and the care you receive.

Please give us accurate and up to date information about yourself (including any changes of address) to help us give you the most appropriate care and treatment.

What information do we record?

The information we record includes:

- Your NHS Number
- Contact details for you and others such as your family or carer
- Your gender and ethnicity
- Information about your job, if you have one, and where you live
- Details of your assessments and case reviews
- Your care plan, treatment received and planned for the future
- Correspondence between this Trust and others involved in your care such as your GP, your social worker (if you have one) and other agencies.





How we store your personal information

The Trust no longer holds paper health records. We keep your information on an electronic care record system. Access to it is restricted to those people who need to know and is not accessible to individuals outside the Trust, or other agencies, without our permission.

If you do not want your personal information to be held on our electronic care record system we are unlikely to be able to care for you properly and to the best of our abilities so we may ask you to seek care from another Trust. This is because if you do not have a record on our electronic system there is a high risk that important information will not be available to healthcare professionals involved in your care and treatment.

Please note that we do not upload your health information on to the national Summary Care Record (the NHS central patient database).

Confidentiality

We know the information you give us may be sensitive and we respect your confidentiality.

We have a legal duty to keep information about you confidential. This means we store it securely and control access to it.

When we use information to help us provide efficient and effective services we do not share information that personally identifies you.

What do we use your information for?

We use your information to:

- Provide you with effective and appropriate care, both now and in the future
- Provide a permanent record of your care, treatment and decisions made about you
- Help us investigate if you make a complaint and
- Monitor and audit the care you receive.

We use information that does not identify you to:

- Plan services for the future
- Monitor our work to make sure we provide high quality, efficient and effective services
- Help protect the health of the local population and
- Make sure we treat everyone fairly.





Sharing your personal information

There may be times when we need to share your information either internally in the Trust or with other agencies.

We only share the minimum information necessary to provide the best treatment, care and protection for yourself or others. This is on a strictly 'need to know' basis. Anyone receiving information about you will be under an equal legal duty to keep it confidential.

Other agencies and individuals might also share information about you to help us care for you.

We might share your personal information in the Trust to:

- Make sure individuals in our multi-disciplinary teams can see and add relevant information to care for you. Multi-disciplinary teams include social workers and other professional who contribute to your care. There are contracts and agreements in place to ensure they comply with Trust confidentiality policies and procedures.

We might share your personal information with other agencies to:

- Help provide you with the care and services you need.

Agencies we share your personal information with might include:

- Your GP
- Other health organisations – e.g. hospitals
- The Housing Department or Housing Agencies
- Department for Work and Pensions (Benefits Agency).

Sharing information with your carer or family

We might share your personal information with your carer or family when you:

- Have given your consent
- Do not have the capacity to make your own decisions or
- Are a young person who is unable to make decisions about your care.

Sharing is only allowed where there is a genuine need. The health professional involved in your care will explain what personal information needs to be shared and how this will be done.

We encourage your carer and members of your family to do this to give us a better understanding of the care you need.

Sharing your personal information without your consent

The sharing of information about you without your consent is strictly controlled by law. The Trust is required to disclose information about you if:

- A serious crime has been committed
- Withholding information could endanger someone's life
- A child or vulnerable adult is at potential risk or
- We are ordered to by a court of law

In these circumstances we will only provide directly relevant information.



Duty to share

In October 2015 the Health and Social Care (Safety and Quality) Act 2015 came into effect, requiring health and adult social care bodies to share information where this will help care for an individual. This new legal duty states that subject to the preferences of the service users, sharing information for the care of individuals is a requirement, not an option.

Sharing information that does not identify you

Sometimes we share information that does not identify you with other agencies – like our commissioners, who provide funding for your care. Providing this information helps organisations like commissioners to plan for future health needs.

Obtaining your consent

The health worker involved in your care will ask you to consent to sharing your personal information. You must be sure you understand what you are agreeing to before you give consent. You may refuse or restrict what information can be shared, or with whom we share it.

You might also be asked to sign a form to confirm you have given your consent to share your information.

Please note we may be unable to care for you if you refuse to share your information.

Giving consent means that your personal information may be shared with your relatives, carers and other services and agencies in order to provide the best care for you.

We may override restrictions in some emergencies or when the law requires it.

If you have any questions or concerns about how we use or share the information we hold about you, please talk to the health worker involved in your care.

Contacting you

If you give us your mobile phone number, we may send you text message reminders about appointments and other non-sensitive information unless you tell us not to.

If you want us to correspond with you about your health by email, we may need to ask for your consent to do so and also to use a special encrypted email system to ensure that your information is sent and received securely.

Access to your records

You have the right by law to see or be given a copy of your health records.

If a relative or a solicitor or someone else is requesting access on your behalf you must give your consent in writing. This should be sent to us when making their formal written request. If not, there will be a delay while we ask them to provide evidence of your consent.

Access to your health records could take up to 40 days.



If you want to request a copy of your records, please contact our Information Services team for a formal application form:

- ✉ Information Services
Newton Building (Building 7)
Springfield University Hospital
61 Glenburnie Road London SW17 7DJ
- ☎ **020 3513 6184**
- @ ssg-tr.infoservices@nhs.net

Please note there may be some information held in your records that we cannot provide to you – for example information that is the personal information of someone else or information that might cause damage or distress.

What to do if you are unhappy about how your personal information has been used, shared or disclosed to you

If you are unhappy with our response to your request for information, or how we have used or shared your information, you should contact the manager where you received your care.

If you remain dissatisfied you can make a formal complaint or suggestion by contacting the Patient Experience Team:

- @ complaintsmanager@swlstg-tr.nhs.uk
- ☎ **020 3513 6150**

If we are unable to resolve your complaint then you have the right to contact the Information Commissioner's Office:

- ✉ Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House, BWater Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF
 - ☎ **01625 545 745** or **0303 123 1113**
 - 🌐 www.ico.org.uk
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Contacting the Trust

- ✉ Trust Headquarters, Springfield University Hospital Building 15, 2nd Floor, South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, Springfield University Hospital, 61 Glenburnie Road, London SW17 7DJ
 - ☎ **020 3513 5000**
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In an emergency (for existing patients of the Trust)

- **Mental Health Support Line: 0800 028 8000**

(5pm to 9am Monday to Friday, 24 hours Saturday and Sunday).

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

You can call our dedicated Patient Experience team and talk to someone about the service you, or the person you care for, has received.

- ☎ **020 3513 6150** (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)

Disclaimer

We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate and up to date but it should not be relied upon as a substitute for specialist professional advice tailored to your situation. So far as is permitted by law, South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust does not accept liability in relation to the use of any information contained in this publication, or third-party information or websites included or referred to in it.

We are the leading provider of mental health services across south west London and a beacon of excellence for national mental health specialist services.

Help us make our services even better

The views of patients, their carers, friends and families are at the heart of improving the way we deliver our services. We are committed to delivering high quality care. Your feedback will help us understand what we do well and what we can do better.

If you would like to give us feedback please contact:

- Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): 020 3513 6150
 - Feedback online at: <https://feedback.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk>
 - Patient Opinion: www.patientopinion.org.uk
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Become a member:

To find out about becoming a member
E-mail: membership@swlstg-tr.nhs.uk



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South West London and St George's Mental Health
NHS Trust

Our values



Respectful



Open



Collaborative



Compassionate



Consistent

Your health
records and you

If you require this document in an alternative format
please call: 020 3513 6006

South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust
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