

It may be necessary to ask for information and views from relatives and carers (without disclosing confidential information), and their right to confidentiality will be respected in the same way, subject to the same exceptions.

Other useful information

Mental Health Advocacy Service supports users of mental health services to make sure that their views and concerns are heard by others.

Freephone 0800 035 0396.

Information Commissioner (nationally): 08456 30 60 60

www.ico.gov.uk

Complaints & compliments

If you have a complaint or compliment about the way information has been managed or used, please contact:

Head of Corporate Affairs

Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Foundation Trust

Fulwood House, Old Fulwood Road

Sheffield S10 3TH

Tel: 0114 271 8956

Version Control - Draft 3 February 2014



Sheffield Health and Social Care **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

Confidentiality and Information Sharing: information for service users and carers

Why do we need to keep confidential information about you?

We ask for information so that we can work out what care and assistance is most appropriate for you.

The Trust is moving towards fully computerised records, so in the future paper files will no longer be used. Currently, information may be kept in 2 locations:

1. On a secure computer system, which checks who is looking at a person's information; all staff know that it is a disciplinary offence for anyone to look at information without good reason.
2. Paper files in secure locations e.g locked filing cabinets.

The way that information about you is collected and held is governed by the Data Protection Act (1998), which outlines how personal information must be handled. As part of staff training the importance of confidentiality is explained & emphasised.

Why do we need to share information?

You have a right to have information about you kept confidential, but we may need to share some at times to make sure you get the services you need. Wherever possible, information will only be shared with your agreement.

By sharing information with people directly involved in your care, we try to reduce the need for you to repeat the same information. Sometimes information needs to be shared to protect you, or other people who may be at risk.

Some information is shared within the NHS to ensure that we continue to provide good services. When your information is used for teaching, audit or research purposes, details that might identify you personally are removed.

Who is information shared with?

Information is shared with professionals or staff directly involved with the provision, planning and management of your care i.e. your care team. Your care team might need access to your relevant past health and social care records.

If certain issues require enhanced confidentiality (for example, very sensitive material from therapy sessions) and are not relevant to risk assessment, “duty of care” or child protection then it is possible that records of this type can be held as password protected encrypted documents on the electronic records system.

Relevant information is shared with other services or teams when they also need information to provide you with a useful service.

Sharing information without your agreement

There are some situations in which we may have to pass information to people outside of Sheffield Health & Social Care Trust without your consent. These are:

- when we are required by law or court order
- when it is necessary to protect you or someone else
- to prevent, detect or prosecute a serious crime
- where professionals need to share information as part of their duty of care

If possible, this will be discussed with you before it is done. However, if you are too unwell, or if to do so would put the worker at serious risk, this might not be possible at the time.

Looking at your information

You have a right to see the information we keep about you. Your worker can supply you with information about the procedure for this (there is a charge). Alternatively you can ring SHSC Medical Records on 271 6310 to make the request yourself. You have the right to challenge anything you think is incorrect, and in cases of disagreement you can add a comment to the notes.

If you would like to know who has visited your electronic notes, your worker can check this for you.

You're entitled to have copies of letters written about you, unless there are clear reasons why this could be harmful.

Sharing information with carers and relatives

Relatives and friends are often a vital part of the support people have in their lives. Many people are pleased for their relatives or carers to be involved in discussions. However, carers do not have an automatic right to be involved, even if they are your next of kin or nearest relative.

Staff will discuss with you any concerns you have about staff sharing information with relatives and carers, and help you to decide what you need to keep private and what they can say if relatives make enquiries about how you are, & what they can do