

## Your Data Protection Rights and Accessing Your Information

The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we use your personal health information. If you believe any of the information we hold about you may not be accurate, or if you have any concerns about us collecting and using information about you as outlined here, you should contact our Clinical Quality Department as detailed below.

You have a right of access to your own records either on computer or written records. You will need to put any request in writing, complete a consent form and this should be accompanied by a copy of your passport or driving license which provides a proof of your identity.

We are permitted to charge a fee of between £10 and £50 to cover our administrative charges under the Data Protection Act 1998 when others are requesting your information.

**For more information please contact:-**

**Information Governance Department  
East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust  
Bedford Office  
Hammond Road, Bedford, MK41 0RG**

**[Email: informationgovernance@eastamb.nhs.uk](mailto:informationgovernance@eastamb.nhs.uk)**



**NHS**  
**East of England  
Ambulance Service**  
NHS Trust



## Patients' Confidential Information What is recorded and how it is used.

### “A Guide for Patients”



**The Data Protection Act was introduced in 1998**

**This leaflet explains your rights under the Act, and  
how the East of England Ambulance Service  
uses your personal health information.**

## **The Information We Receive**

As a Trust, we have a duty to keep your personal data and clinical records accurate, confidential, safe and secure.

Information about you and your healthcare is gathered by us when you access emergency care, non-emergency care, and primary care services. Records may be written or held on computer systems and will include the interactions between you and the ambulance service. Information recorded may include:-

- Your name, address and date of birth, next of kin.
- Your symptoms and any relevant previous medical history.
- The name and address of your GP and the medications that you are currently taking.
- Relevant information from other health and social care professionals, relatives or those who care for you and know you well.

## **How your information is used**

Your information helps us to manage the care you receive to make sure that:

- Everyone involved in your care has accurate and up-to-date information to assess your needs and provide the most appropriate healthcare and treatment both now and in the future.
- Information is made available and shared with other healthcare professionals who become involved in your treatment and care.
- Information is available should you need to see another healthcare professional or be referred to social services or to access community related care
- Information is available to help us decide if you received the right type of care and treatment and ongoing support
- That we are able to review and improve the quality of care and treatment you received through clinical audit
- Our training and education programmes for staff are appropriate and meets patient needs and expectations.
- As a research-active organisation the Trust and its patients may have the opportunity to participate in high quality research

relevant to the pre-hospital setting. Further information about the Trust Research Support Service can be obtained via (insert external weblink) and @EEAST\_Research.

- The Trust can manage and plan the work of the Trust and its responses to you and look after the health of the general public.

## **Safeguarding information**

The Trust is required to share safeguarding information with the right people at the right time and this is often without your consent to:

- Prevent death or serious harm
- Coordinate effective and efficient responses
- Enable early interventions to prevent the escalation of risk
- Prevent abuse and harm that may increase the need for care and support
- Maintain and improve good practice in safeguarding
- Reveal patterns of abuse that were previously undetected and that could identify others at risk of abuse
- Help people to access the right kind of support to reduce risk and promote wellbeing
- Help identify people who may pose a risk to others and, where possible work to reduce offending behaviour
- Reduce organisational risk and protect reputation.

## **Complaints and enquiries**

Files relating to complaints or enquiries we receive will only be seen by the staff who are dealing with the matter. We will only pass this to another organisation or body if you ask us to do this, for example, if you request that our response to your complaint is reviewed by a separate regulating body. We may sometimes be asked for information about the service we have provided you with by other organisations investigating a complaint or enquiry you have made to them, or if you are pursuing a legal claim against them.

## Sharing the Information

- When care or treatment provided by the ambulance service may affect the care you are already receiving from other health professionals, e.g. your G.P. or district nurse, we may share relevant information with them.
- We are required by law to notify the Government of certain diseases (e.g. meningitis) for public health reasons.
- We are sometimes required by law to pass on information to the police in order to assist them in the prevention and detection of serious crime. This information is released under the guidance of our Release of Information Procedure.
- If the Trust is asked for medical reports (containing personally identifiable information) by solicitors, insurance companies or for research purposes, we will always require the patient's consent before disclosing the information.
- We only ever use or pass on information about you if people have a genuine need for it and it is in your own and others' interest. Whenever we can, we shall remove details which identify you. • Anyone who receives information from us is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential and sensitive.
- The sharing of some types of very sensitive personal information is strictly controlled by the law.

### How do you know your records will be kept confidential?

All NHS organisations have a legal duty of confidence to their patients and the Data Protection Act 1998 further defines how we can collect and handle personal information. The NHS also has an additional set of guidelines, known as the Caldicott principles, which apply to the use of patient information. All NHS organisations are required to appoint a Caldicott Guardian to ensure patient information is handled in accordance with legal and NHS regulations. The Trust's Caldicott Guardian is the Medical Director and can be contacted at the address below:

Medical Director  
East of England Ambulance Service Trust Headquarters

Hammond Road Bedford  
MK41 0RG

### Disclosure to third parties

We will seek your consent before we release information that identifies you to any third party for any other reason than those set out in this guidance. We will not pass information that identifies you to another person or organisation (including friends or relatives) without your knowledge or permission unless we have an overriding legal duty to do so or unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as when it is justified in the public interest; for example:

- when a serious crime has been committed;
  - when there are serious risks to the public or NHS staff; or
  - to protect children or vulnerable adults who are not able to decide for themselves whether their information should be shared.
- or where the law requires information to be passed on; for example-
- Where a formal court order has been issued.

When we pass on any information we will ensure that the recipient is aware that it must be kept confidential and secure.

### How long do we keep your records?

We retain your clinical records and details of emergency calls for 10 years. Other records that may contain information about you are kept for varying lengths of time, reference can be made to the Department of Health's Records Management: NHS Code of Practice part 1 & 2 for further information.