

YOUR Records and YOU

Information for Service Users



This leaflet explains how we use and share your personal information, how you can access it and what to do if you are unhappy with the way we handle it.

Bedfordshire **NHS**
mental health and wellbeing service
provided by ELFT

Caring for you

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

What information do we record?

The information we record includes:

- Your NHS number
- Contact details for you and other members of your family
- 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, including the treatment you have received and any planned for the future
- Correspondence between us and other people such as your GP, your social worker (if you have one), and other agencies involved in your care

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

We keep your information on our local electronic health records system. Access to it is strictly controlled and is only allowed on a need to know basis. It 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 local electronic system we are unlikely to be able to care for you and you may be asked to seek care from another Trust. This also applies to individuals who work for the Trust and are also service users. This is because there is a risk if you do not have a record on our local electronic system.

Some records including our older records are kept in paper case files.

Please note we do not upload your health information to the national Summary Care Record.

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 personal information to:

- Provide you with effective and appropriate care, both now and in the future
- Explain our decisions
- Help us investigate if you make a complaint
- Monitor and audit our care of you

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
- Treat everyone fairly.

Sharing your personal information

We 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 professionals who contribute to your care. There are contracts in place to make sure they comply with Trust confidentiality policies and procedures

We 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 include:

- Your GP
- Other health organisations - for example, the hospital
- The Housing Department or Housing Agencies
- The Benefits Agency.

Sharing information with your carer or family:

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

- Have given your consent
- Do not have the capacity to make your own decisions
- Are a young person who is unable to make decisions about your care
- Are involved in family care and you have agreed to share information about family therapy sessions

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 only share the minimum amount of 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 will also share information about you to help us care for you.

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

The sharing of information about you without your permission is strictly controlled by law.

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. When we do this we remove the information that identifies you. We call this ‘anonymised’ or ‘pseudonymised’ information.

Obtaining your consent

The worker involved in your care will ask you to consent to sharing your personal information. You may refuse or restrict what information can be shared, or who we can share it with. Occasionally we may be unable to care for you if you refuse to share your information.

You will be asked to sign a ‘Permission to Use and Share’ form acknowledging your consent. Full consent means that your personal information may be shared with your relatives, carers and other services and agencies to provide the best care for you.

You must make sure you fully understand what you are agreeing to before you sign the ‘Permission to Use and Share’ form.

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 information about you, please talk to the worker involved in your care

Contacting you

If you give us your mobile phone number, we will 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, you must agree on our 'Permission to Use and Share Information' form. You must also send us an email from the email account you want us to send information to. If you do not send us an email we will not be able to send emails to you.

Access to your records

You have a right to see or be given a copy of your health records, whether it is held on paper or electronically.

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 they make their formal written request. If not there will be a delay whilst we ask them to provide your consent. There may be a charge for providing them with your records.

Access to your health records could take up to 40 days although we aim to respond within 21 days.

If you want to see your records or be given a copy of your records, contact the manager where you received your care. If you are unsure who this is, contact the Information Governance team at:

Email: foi@elft.nhs.uk

Post: **The Green**
1 Roger Dowley Court
Russia Lane, London E2 6NJ

Further information is available on the Trust website at <http://www.elft.nhs.uk>

Please note there may be occasions when we are legally prevented from providing you with all the information you want to see

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:

Phone: Call free of charge on **0800 7834839**

Post: **Consumer Relations**
FREEPOST RTKB-ESXB-HYYX
9 Alie Street
London E1 8DE

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

Web: <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

Post: **Information Commissioner's Office**
Wycliffe House
Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 5AF

Tel: **01625 545700**

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