

The Data Protection Act - Your Personal Health Information

To provide you with the care you need, we hold details of your consultations, illnesses, tests, prescriptions and other treatments that have been recorded by everyone involved in your care and treatment, e.g. GP, health visitor, practice nurse. The information may be stored on paper or electronically on computer files by practice staff.

We sometimes disclose some of your personal health information with other organisations involved in your care. For example, when your GP refers you to a specialist at the hospital, we will send relevant details about you in the referral letter and receive information about you from them. Our practice also participates in regional and national programmes such as the cervical cytology screening service and therefore your name and address, date of birth and NHS number would be given to them in order to send an invitation to you.

We need to use some of your personal health information for administrative purposes. In order to receive payment for services provided to you, we have to disclose basic details about you to the Ayrshire & Arran Health Board and also common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service. These organisations have a role in protecting public funds, and are authorised to check that payments are being properly made. We are required to co-operate with these checks and the disclosure of your data is a necessary part of our provision of health care services.

Sometimes we may participate in studies that are designed to improve the way services are provided to you or to check that our performance meets required standards and benchmarks. Whenever we take part in activities such as these we will ensure that, as far as possible, any details that may identify you are not disclosed.

We are sometimes involved in health research and the teaching of student nurses, doctors and other health professionals. Again, we will not use or disclose your personal health information for these purposes unless you have been informed before hand and given you consent for use to do so. Where you need a service jointly provided with a local authority we will seek your permission before giving them your details. Sometimes we are required by law to pass on information of births and deaths and certain diseases or crimes to the government as a legal requirement.

Our use of your personal health information is covered by duty of confidentiality and is regulated by the Data Protection Act. The Data protection Act gives you a number of rights in relation to how your personal information is used, including a right to access of information we hold about you.

Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to keep information we hold about you confidential and adheres to a code of practice on protecting patient confidentiality. Further information on this can be found at

www.nhsis.co.uk/confidentiality. anyone who receives information from this is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential.

If you have any queries or concerns on how we use your personal health information, or would like to access your information, please contact our Business Manager, Mrs Alison Bird