

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS

care.data

GP practices nationwide will soon be required to supply patients' personal and confidential medical information, on a regular and continuous basis, to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC).

This could start happening within a matter of weeks.

This information will be extracted from the practice in a form that can identify you, and will include your NHS number, date of birth, postcode, gender and ethnicity, together with your medical diagnoses (including cancer and mental health), their complications, referrals to specialists, your prescriptions, your family history, details of your vaccinations and screening tests, your blood test results, your body mass index, and your smoking/alcohol habits.

This programme is called *care.data*, and the information uploaded will be used for purposes *other than your direct medical care* (so-called "secondary uses").

Medical staff treating you in GP surgeries, hospitals, A&E and out-of-hours centres will not use, or be able to use, this database. However, the uploaded data may be made available to organisations outside of the NHS, such as universities and commercial organisations in future.

Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, GP practices have **no** choice but to allow the HSCIC to extract this information. Once the data has been extracted, the GP practice is no longer the data controller for that information, and cannot control or protect in any way how that information is used, shared or who has access to it.

Although GP practices cannot object to this information leaving the practice, individual patients and their families can instruct their practice to prohibit the transfer of their data, i.e. **you have the right to opt-out**.

If you do nothing, i.e. you do not opt out, then your medical information *will* be extracted and uploaded to the HSCIC.

Once uploaded, you will *not* be able to get this data deleted by the HSCIC.

This is *not* The NHS Database (The Summary Care Record).

You will still need to opt out to prevent *care.data* uploads even if you have already opted out of the NHS Database

The NHS Database opt out will not prevent *care.data* uploads.

For more information about *care.data* and how to opt out of extracting your confidential information, please read our factsheet available in the lobby and waiting room, from reception, or downloadable from our website.