Who are our partner organisations

The principal partner organisations, with whom information may be shared:

- Health Authorities
- NHS Hospital Trusts
- Primary Care Trusts
- Ambulance Services

Your information may also, subject to strict agreements describing how it will be used, be shared with:

- NHS Common Services Agencies such as Primary Care Agencies
- Social Services
- Education Services
- Local Authorities
- Voluntary Sector Providers
- Private Sector Providers

How you can get access to your own health records

The Data Protection Act 1998, which came into force on 1st March 2000, allows you to find out what information about you is held on computer and in certain manual records. This is known as "right of subject access". It applies to your health records.

If you want to see them you should make a written request to the NHS organisations where you are being, or have been, treated. This includes the Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery if you are being treated as a patient by us. You are entitled to receive a copy but should note that a charge will usually be made. We currently charge £10 for a print out of your records from our computer system. These go back to about 1998 in most cases, but depend on where you were registered since then. We charge £50 if you wish to receive photocopies of all your notes held on paper.

You should also be aware that in certain circumstances your right to see some details in your health records may be limited in your own interest or for other reasons.

Further information

If you would like to know more about how we use your information or if, for any reason, you do not wish to have your information used in any of the ways described in this leaflet please speak to the health professionals concerned with your care. You can also contact the NHS organisation - such as the hospital, clinic, GP surgery - where you are being treated.

Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery

Factory Lane West, Halstead, Essex, CO9 1EX

Tel 0187 475 944   Fax 01787 474 506

North Chelmsford NHC HC

2 White Hart Lane, Chelmsford, CM2 5EF

Tel 0300 123. 33 66 Fax 0300 123 44 66

Elizabeth Courtauld Partnership

YOUR INFORMATION

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

This leaflet explains why Information is collected about you and the ways in which this Information may be used.

Why we collect information about you

Your doctor and other health professionals caring for you keep records about your health and any treatment and care you receive from the National Health Service. These help ensure that you receive the best possible care from us.
They may be written down (manual records), or held on a computer. The records may include:

- basic details about you, such as address and next of kin
- contacts we have had with you, such as clinic visits
- notes and reports about your health and any treatment and care you have received
- details and records about the treatment and care you receive
- results of investigations, such as X-rays and laboratory tests
- relevant information from other health professionals, or those who care for you and know you well

How your records are used to help you

Your records are used to guide professionals in the care you receive to ensure that:

- your doctor, nurse or any other healthcare professionals involved in your care has accurate and up-to-date information to assess your health and decide what care you need
- full information is available if you see another doctor, or are referred to a specialist or another part of the NHS there is a good basis for assess ing the type and quality of care you have received
- your concerns can be properly investigated if you need to complain

How your records are used to help the NHS

Your information may also be used to help us:

- assess the needs of the general population
- make sure our services can meet patient needs in the future
- review the care we provide to ensure it is of the highest standard
- teach and train healthcare professionals
- conduct health research and development
- pay your GP, dentist and hospital for the care they provide
- audit NHS accounts and services
- prepare statistics on NHS performance
- investigate complaints, legal claims or untoward incidents

Some of this information will be held centrally, but where this is used for statistical purposes stringent measures are taken to ensure that individual patients cannot be identified. Anonymous statistical information may also be passed to organisations with a legitimate interest, including universities, community safety units and research institutions.

Where it is not possible to use anonymised information, personally identifiable information may be used for essential NHS purposes. These may include research and auditing services. This will only be done with your consent, unless the law requires information to be passed on to improve public health.

How we keep your records confidential

Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential

You may be receiving care from other organisations as well as the NHS (like Social Services). We may need to share some information about you so we can all work together for your benefit.

We will only ever use or pass on information about you if others involved in your care have a genuine need for it.

We will not disclose your information to third parties without your permission unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as when the health or safety of others is at risk or where the law requires information to be passed on.

Anyone who receives information from us is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential

We are required by law to report certain information to the appropriate authorities. This is only provided after formal permission has been given by a qualified health professional. Occasions when we must pass on information include:

- notification of new births
- where we encounter infectious diseases which may endanger the safety of others, such as meningitis or measles (but not HIV/AIDS)
- where a formal court order has been issued

Our guiding principle is that we are holding your records in strict confidence