

BOLINGBROKE MEDICAL CENTRE

Confidentiality Policy



All members of the primary health care team in the course of their duties have access to your medical records. They all adhere to the highest standards of maintaining confidentiality.

As our reception area is a little public, if you wish to discuss something of a confidential nature please mention it to one of the Receptionist who will make arrangements for you to have the necessary privacy.

Information sharing

The practice complies with Data Protection and Access to Medical Records legislation.

Identifiable information about you will be shared with others in the following circumstances:

- To provide further medical treatment for you e.g. from district nurses and hospital services.
- To help you get other services e.g. from the social work department. This requires your consent.
- When we have a duty to others e.g. in child protection cases.
- Anonymised patient information will also be used at local and national level to help the Health Board and Government plan services e.g. for diabetic care. If you do not wish anonymous information about you to be used in such a way, please let us know.

Reception and administration staff requires access to your medical records in order to do their jobs. These members of staff are bound by the same rules of confidentiality as the medical staff.

Access to medical records

Under the Access to Health Records Act (1998) patients are allowed to view their medical records. Copies of such records can also be requested, in writing, for which we make a charge. We hold patient information on computer and comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

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

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We sometimes disclose some of your personal health information with other organisations involved in your care. For example, when your Doctor 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 cervical cytology screening service and your name and address, date of birth and health number will 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 NHS Board responsible for this area. 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 healthcare 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. We will not use or disclose your personal health information for these purposes unless you have been informed beforehand and given your consent for us 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, e.g. the notification of births and deaths and certain diseases or crimes to the government is a legal requirement.

Our use of your personal health information is covered by a 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 the information we hold about you.

Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential and adheres to a Code of Practice on Protection Patient confidentiality. Further information on this can be found at www.nhsis.co.uk/confidentiality. Anyone who receives information from us is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential.

Freedom of Information

The ICO has published a new Model Publication Scheme that all public authorities are required to adopt.