



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Privacy Notice NHS Number**

This notice, in conjunction with Wokingham Borough Councils overarching privacy statement, provides further details on how Wokingham Borough Council uses your information across the local Health and Social Care Community.

If you are receiving services or support through Wokingham's Adult Social Care teams, then NHS funded organisations will probably be sharing your NHS number with us. Your NHS Number is shared between organisations so local NHS services and Adult Social Care teams can use the same unique number to identify you, and your records, when they work together increasingly closely to better improve your care and support.

Your NHS number is usually provided by NHS staff caring for you, but it can also be accessed from NHS Digital by using an NHS service called "Personal Demographic Service" (PDS). Essentially Adult Social Care sends basic demographic information collected from you or your representative (such as your name, address and date of birth) to the PDS so they can find your NHS number for us. Once obtained from the PDS, your NHS number is stored as part of your confidential record within our Adult Services' case management system, in line with our retention policy.

Your NHS number has two main uses locally:

- As a unique identifier to allow limited amounts of social care information to be displayed in the Berkshire Connected Care system (an integrated care record used across the local health and care community; for more information please see <https://www.shareyourcareberkshire.org/>)
- To include your NHS number on a limited set of printed materials (such as your care plan) for use by health and social care colleagues in the provision of direct care.

The Berkshire Connected Care system is being developed to provide health and social care professionals, directly involved in providing integrated care to Berkshire's residents, with access to a key set of up-to-date information about patients who have requested help. Relevant information, from different health and care organisations, is linked together automatically using a person's NHS number as a unique identifier. GP's, Hospitals, the Ambulance Service, District Nurses and Social Workers across Berkshire are using Connected Care as an information source when providing either direct care or assessing a person's care needs. Access to information within Connected Care is strictly controlled, with the information being shared limited by both the role of the professional and the consent of the patient. For example, social workers will only have access to information that is relevant to their care duties.

Wokingham Borough Council is a Data Controller under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018 and we are legally responsible for ensuring that all personal information we process (i.e. hold, obtain, record, use or share about you) is done in compliance with data protection principles. Currently all data controllers notify the Information Commissioner's Office of all personal information processing activities. Our registration number is Z4660815 and our entry can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website at: <http://www.ico.org.uk>

All of our staff, contractors and committee members receive appropriate and on-going training. This ensures they are aware of their personal responsibilities and contractual obligations to uphold confidentiality, enforceable through disciplinary procedures. Only a limited number of

staff are given access to personal information, and then only where it is appropriate to their role; this access is given on a “need-to-know basis”.

The use of joined up information across health and social care brings many benefits to people wishing to access services. A good example of this is for the discharge of patients from hospital into social care. At the moment delays in discharge can occur because details of existing social care involvement are not available to the staff on the hospital ward, so they do not know whom to contact to discuss the ongoing care of a patient. The linking of social care and health information, through use of their unique NHS number, will help hospital staff identify promptly whether social care support is already in place, and who the most appropriate contact is to discuss ongoing care requirements; so care can be planned earlier in the process where hospital staff will know who to talk to.

In addition, the sharing of information will bring the following benefits:

- Better co-ordinated and safer care, across the local health and social care community, enabled through the sharing of real-time information.
- Better coordination of discharges from hospital into social care, as explained above
- Better planning and co-ordination with social care, because health staff can identify and involve them earlier in the process.
- Earlier intervention to maximise the opportunities for reablement services, leading to greater independence for patients
- Less paperwork and more efficient use of social care resources

The NHS number will also be printed on some social care documentation (if a printed copy is necessary) that is designed for use in communications between health and social care organisations. This brings the benefit of better co-ordinated, and thus safer care, across the local health and social care community; where a patient is identified through the use of their unique NHS identifier as well as their name and date of birth. These printed forms relate to:

- Assessments/Re-assessments
- Support and care planning

You have the right to object to the processing of your NHS Number. This will not stop you from receiving care, but may limit how we are able to support your needs. If you have any concerns about us using your NHS number, please ask and we will discuss with you how this may affect our ability to provide you with care, and any other options you have.

If you object to the use of your NHS number, or if you want to discuss any of the above in more detail, please contact your named worker; if you do not currently have a named worker please email [bks-tr.hub@nhs.net](mailto:bks-tr.hub@nhs.net)

## **The Future**

Legislation is currently being discussed further in Parliament and will involve the new Data Protection Act 2018 and another Act to create the role of the National Data Guardian. Both of these Acts are expected to create ways of holding health and social care information securely, but with wider access to the information across the sector; this will be separate from the current GDPR expectations.

This privacy notice will be updated once these Acts become law and further guidance has been published by NHS England's Information Governance Alliance.