

**Q** How can patients receive copies of medical records?

**A** By applying under the Data Protection Act 1998 to the Medical Records Department.

Application forms will need to be completed, to verify identity and locate the appropriate records.

On receipt of the completed application, copies of the requested records should be received within twenty-one days (forty days in some instances). There will be a charge for this service.

Applications for copies of deceased patient records is under the Access to Health Records Act 1990, but should still be made to the Medical Records Department.

**Q** What can patients do to help us maintain accurate information?

**A** Whenever your details have changed i.e. name, address, telephone number, GP details or next of kin, please make sure that you inform a member of staff, who will ensure the records are updated accordingly.

If you require any further information regarding this leaflet, please contact the Data Protection Officer/FOI Lead or Litigation/Medico Legal Team Leader via 01708 435000.

# WHAT HAPPENS TO PATIENT INFORMATION?

...a leaflet to answer the questions...



**Q** Why do we ask for personal information?

**A** To ensure that clinicians have a complete and continuous record about the past, current and future treatment of patients.

**Q** Why do we keep this information?

**A** This information is kept, together with details of care, because it may be needed if a patient requires treatment again.

**Q** Are records kept secure?

**A** Yes, the Trust actively implements security measures to ensure patient information is kept secure, and reported breaches of confidentiality are investigated.

**Q** How are records used to help the NHS?

**A** Some information may be used to help us:

- Protect the health of the general public
- Ensure our services meet patient needs in the future
- Train and educate our staff
- Monitor clinical practice
- Pay the hospital, dentist and GP for the care and treatment they provide
- Audit accounts and services within the NHS
- Investigate legal claims, complaints or untoward incidents
- Provide anonymised statistics on the NHS performance and activity
- Undertake research and development

The Local Research Ethics Committee (LREC) approves

research undertaken, and consent will be sought should any identifiable information be necessary.

**Q** Is Information disclosed:

**A** Information may sometimes be disclosed as a requirement of law, for example the notification of a birth. It may also be disclosed to other non-NHS organisations, patients may be receiving care from.

All NHS staff have a legal duty to maintain confidentiality. Non-NHS staff who have received information from us, also have a duty to keep it confidential.

Personal information is only shared if there is a genuine need, thus allowing us to work together for patient benefit. Where possible Hospital or NHS numbers are used in communications.