



# Patient Confidentiality

## Information for Patients and Families



## **Your information**

### **How we use it and keep it (including Access to Medical Records)**

We receive a lot of personal information about patients from you, your family and other services. We need this information so that we can provide you with best care and treatment. Members of the hospice team looking after you may share your personal information with each other. This team may include nurses, doctors, therapists, pharmacists and clerical support staff plus students and trainees in medicine or other health and social care professionals who are looking after you.

#### **1. How your records are used to help you**

All hospice health and social care professionals involved in your care need to have accurate and up-to-date information to assess your condition and to give you the best possible treatment and care. Your records allow us to review the care we provide to make sure it is of the highest possible standard and meets all your healthcare needs.

#### **2. We may need to share information about you so we can work together for you**

Members of the hospice team looking after you may share with each other, for example, details about you and your family's contact details and notes and reports about your health and the care you need. Often it is necessary to share your information with professionals in other services who may be directly involved with your care or if you need treatment elsewhere. Your information will only be made available if there is a genuine need to do so. Such professionals might, for example, include GPs, ambulance services and social care services.

You may ask for your information to be transferred to another service and we will always agree to transfer the information requested, unless there is a good reason why we cannot. If so, we will explain the reason fully to you.

We will not share information about you with your family or friends without your consent.

Sometimes we have to pass on information by law. For example:

- Finding an infectious disease that may endanger the safety of others
- Where a formal court order has been issued
- Information about you may be shared if you are involved in an emergency situation
- In response to a formal written request by you or your legal guardian.

### **3. How you can help us to make sure we always hold the correct information about you**

You can help us by:

- Giving our staff the right details about yourself
- Letting us know if any of your details are not right or have changed since your last visit.

### **4. How your records may be used to help the hospice**

Your records allow us to review the care we provide to make sure it is of the highest possible standard and meets all healthcare needs.

Some information we hold may be shared with other professionals or organisations. For example:

- To train and teach health and social care professionals
- To provide statistical information to national organisations with legitimate interests in healthcare and its management.

When we use your records in this way, we remove or disguise identifiable personal information about you wherever possible.

If removal of identifiable personal information is not possible, we will ask you directly for your consent to disclose it. Your decision can be given verbally or in writing. Your wishes regarding this information will be respected.

## **5. How we keep your records safe and confidential**

Everyone working for the hospice or who receives information from us has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

They are monitored by the Caldicott Guardian, a senior clinician responsible for ensuring that patients' rights to confidentiality are respected. Our Caldicott Guardian also ensures our information security and compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **6. How long does the hospice keep health records?**

We keep most records for three years, unless the law requires them to be kept for longer. If we are told about a formal enquiry or legal action, we will keep the records until they are no longer required.



## **7. Your information rights**

You have the right to:

- Know how we will use your personal information. That is what this leaflet aims to let you know.
- Access your medical records – the ‘right of access to personal data’. If you want to do this, please address any request to the Head of Clinical Services. There may be a charge for this.
- Access a deceased persons medical records - the patient’s family, or authorized representative, is able to access health records under the provisions of the Access to Health Records Act 1990. Please address any request to the Head of Clinical Services. There may be a charge for this.
- Object to us making use of your information.
- Ask us to change or restrict the way in which we use your information. We are obliged to agree if it is possible to do so.
- Include any corrections you want to make in the record.

## **8. Who do I contact if I would like to know more or have concerns?**

If you would like to know more about how we use your information, or if you have concerns about it, please contact our Head of Clinical Services and Caldicott Guardian at the address below:

Head of Clinical Services  
St Andrew’s Hospice  
Henderson Street  
ML66DJ

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*The Chief Executive* at the Hospice would welcome any comments, suggestions or complaints you may have about the service.

If you have a complaint that is not answered to your satisfaction, you can pass this on to the regulator of the Hospice;

*Healthcare Improvement Scotland* at the following address:



Gyle Square  
1 South Gyle Crescent  
Edinburgh  
EH12 9EB

T: 0131 623 4342

E: [hcis.clinicregulation@nhs.net](mailto:hcis.clinicregulation@nhs.net)

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