



Privacy Notice

Updated June 2024

How we use your information

This privacy notice explains why we as a surgery collect information about our patients and how we use that information.

The Meadows Surgery manages patient information in accordance with existing laws and with guidance from organisations that govern the provision of healthcare in England such as the Department of Health and the General Medical Council.

We are committed to protecting your privacy and will only use information collected lawfully in accordance with:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulations 2016
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Common Law Duty of Confidentiality
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- NHS Codes of Confidentiality and Information Security

As data controllers, GPs have fair processing responsibilities under the **Data Protection Act 1998**. In practice, this means ensuring that your personal confidential data (PCD) is handled clearly and transparently, and in a reasonably expected way.

The **Health and Social Care Act 2012** changed the way that personal confidential data is processed, therefore it is important that our patients are aware of and understand these changes, and that you have an opportunity to object and know how to do so.

The health care professionals who provide you with care maintain records about your health and any NHS treatment or care you have received (e.g., NHS Hospital Trust, GP Surgery, Walk-in clinic, etc.). These records help to provide you with the best possible healthcare.

NHS health records may be processed electronically, on paper or a mixture of both; a combination of working practices and technology are used to ensure that your information is kept confidential and secure. Records held by this surgery may include the following information:

- Details about you, such as address and next of kin
- Any contact the practice has had with you, including appointments (emergency or scheduled), clinic visits, etc.
- Notes and reports about your health, details about treatment and care received
- Results of investigations, such as laboratory tests, x-rays, etc.
- Relevant information from other health professionals, relatives or those who care for you

The surgery collects and holds data for the sole purpose of providing healthcare services to our patients and we will ensure that the information is kept confidential. However, we can disclose personal information if:

- I. It is required by law

- II. You provide consent - either implicitly or for the sake of your own care, or explicitly for other purposes
- III. It is justified to be in the public interest

Some of this information will be held centrally and used for statistical purposes. Where we hold data centrally, we take strict and secure measures to ensure that individual patients cannot be identified.

Information may be used for **clinical audit** purposes to monitor the quality of service provided, and may be held centrally and used for statistical purposes. Where we do this we ensure that patient records cannot be identified.

A patient can object to their personal information being shared with other health care providers but if this limits the treatment that you can receive then the doctor will explain this to you at the time.

Mobile Telephone

If you provide us with your mobile phone number, we will take this as consent to receiving SMS and we may use this to send you reminders about any appointments or other health screening information being carried out. If you wish to dissent from receiving SMS messages, please inform us.

Risk Stratification

Risk stratification is a process for identifying and managing patients who are at high risk of requiring emergency or urgent care. Typically, this is because patients have a long-term condition such as COPD, cancer or other medical conditions which are at risk of sudden worsening. NHS England (the national Commissioning Board) encourages GPs to use risk stratification tools as part of their local strategies for supporting patients with long-term conditions and to provide care plans and planned care with the aim to prevent avoidable admissions or other emergency care.

Information about you is collected from a number of sources including NHS Trusts and from this surgery. Risk stratification enables your GP to focus on preventing ill health and not just the treatment of sickness. If necessary, your GP may be able to offer you additional services. Please note that you have the right to opt out of Risk Stratification.

Should you have any concerns about how your information is managed or wish to opt out of any data collection at the surgery, please contact the practice, or your healthcare professional to discuss how the disclosure of your personal information can be limited. Patients have the right to change their minds and reverse a previous decision. Please contact the practice if you change your mind regarding any previous choice.

Invoice Validation

If you have received treatment within the NHS your personal information may be shared within a strictly monitored, secure and confidential environment in order to determine which Integrated Care Board should pay for the treatment or procedure you have received.

Information such as your name, address and date of treatment may be passed on to enable the billing process. These details are held in a secure environment and kept confidential. This information will only be used to validate invoices, and will not be shared for any further commissioning purposes.

How do we maintain the confidentiality of your records?

We are committed to protecting your privacy and will only use information collected lawfully in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (which is overseen by the Information Commissioner's Office), Human Rights Act, the Common Law Duty of Confidentiality, and the NHS Codes of Confidentiality and Security.

All our staff, contractors and committee members receive appropriate and on-going training to ensure they are aware of their personal responsibilities and have contractual obligations to uphold confidentiality, enforceable through disciplinary procedures. Only a limited number of authorised staff has access to personal information where it is appropriate to their role and is strictly on a need-to-know basis.

We maintain our duty of confidentiality to you at all times. 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 any third party without your permission unless there are exceptional circumstances (i.e. life or death situations), or where the law requires information to be passed on.

Who are our partner organisations?

We may also have to share your information, subject to strict agreements on how it will be used, with the following organisations:

- NHS Trusts
- Specialist Trusts
- Independent Contractors such as dentists, opticians, pharmacists
- Private Sector Providers
- Voluntary Sector Providers
- Ambulance Trusts
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Social Care Services
- Local Authorities
- Education Services
- Fire and Rescue Services
- Police
- Other 'data processors'

Access to personal information

You have a right under the Data Protection Act 1998 to access/view information the Practice holds about you, and to have it amended or removed should it be inaccurate. This is known as 'the right of subject access'.

If we do hold information about you we will:

- give you a description of it;
- tell you why we are holding it;
- tell you who it could be disclosed to; and
- let you have a copy of the information in an intelligible form

If you would like to make a 'subject access request'. Please contact the practice in writing.

Change of Details

It is important that you tell the person treating you if any of your details such as your name, address, telephone number have changed or if any of your details such as date of birth is incorrect in order for this to be amended. You have a responsibility to inform us of any changes so our records are accurate and up to date for you.

Notification

The Data Protection Act 1998 requires organisations to register a notification with the Information Commissioner to describe the purposes for which they process personal and sensitive information. This information is publicly available on the Information Commissioners Office website www.ico.org.uk. The practice is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

Who is our Data Protection Officer?

The practice has appointed Midlands and Lancashire CSU as its Data Protection Officer. Their contact number is 01782 872648 and their email address is mlcsu.dpo@nhs.net.

How long do we hold information for?

All records held by the surgery will be kept for the duration specified by national guidance from the Department of Health, the Records Management Code of Practice for Health and Social Care 2016. Confidential information is securely destroyed in accordance with this code of practice.

Objections / Complaints

Should you have any concerns about how your information is managed by the surgery, please contact:

The Meadows Surgery

Meadow Lane

Thrapston

NN14 4GD

themeadows.k83616@nhs.net

If you are still unhappy following a review by the surgery, you can complain to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) via their website www.ico.gov.uk or by telephone: 0303 123 1113.

Any changes to this notice will be published on our website and displayed in prominent notices in the surgery.

Further information

Further information about the way in which the NHS uses personal information and your rights in that respect can be found in:

The NHS Care Record Guarantee: https://digital.nhs.uk/media/329/Care-Record-Guarantee/pdf/Care_Record_Guarantee

The NHS Constitution: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england/the-nhs-constitution-for-england>

Codes of practice for handling information in health and care including Records Management Code of Practice for Health and Social Care 2016, Code of practice on confidential information, HSCIC Guide to Confidentiality 2013 <https://digital.nhs.uk/codes-of-practice-handling-information>

An independent review of information about patients is shared across the health and care system led by Dame Fiona Caldicott was conducted in 2012. The report, Information: To share or not to share? The Information Governance Review, be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/192572/2900774_InfoGovernance_accv2.pdf

The Information Commissioner's Office is the Regulator for the Data Protection Act 1998 and offer independent advice and guidance on the law and personal data, including your rights and how to access your personal information. For further information please visit the Information Commissioner's Office website at <http://www.ico.org.uk>