

# Privacy Notice – OpenSAFELY Data Analytics Service

Last updated 17.12.2025. Applies to Newtons Practice patients

## 1) What is OpenSAFELY?

OpenSAFELY is an NHS England secure analytics service. It allows approved users (such as researchers, analysts and data scientists) to run queries on pseudonymised (de-identified) patient data from GP practices and NHS England to support public benefit activities including clinical audit, service evaluation, health surveillance, research, policy and planning, commissioning, and public health purposes. Approved users receive only anonymised aggregate outputs; they cannot access raw patient records. [\[digital.nhs.uk\]](https://digital.nhs.uk), [\[opensafely.org\]](https://opensafely.org)

## 2) Who is involved and who controls the data?

- Your GP practice remains the Data Controller for the source GP patient data in our clinical system. [\[lmc.org.uk\]](https://lmc.org.uk)
- NHS England runs OpenSAFELY and acts as Data Controller for intermediate, study-specific datasets inside the platform. [\[OpenSAFELY\]](https://opensafely.org)
- System suppliers (TPP/SystmOne and Optum/EMIS Web) operate OpenSAFELY within their secure environments as Data Processors. [\[digital.nhs.uk\]](https://digital.nhs.uk)

## 3) What data is used?

OpenSAFELY uses structured and coded GP data only (e.g., diagnoses, procedures, medications, test results, age, sex, and region). It does not include free-text notes, letters, images or scans, and does not include direct identifiers such as name, address or exact date of birth; these are replaced with pseudonyms before analysis. [\[lmc.org.uk\]](https://lmc.org.uk)

## 4) What is the legal basis?

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care issued the NHS OpenSAFELY Data Analytics Service Pilot Directions 2025, which require NHS England to operate the service. NHS England then issued a Data Provision Notice (DPN) that legally requires GP practices using TPP and Optum (EMIS Web) systems to make coded data available to OpenSAFELY for the approved purposes. The pilot currently runs until 31 March 2027. [\[digital.nhs.uk\]](https://digital.nhs.uk)

## 5) How does OpenSAFELY protect your privacy?

- Analyses run inside the secure environments of the GP system suppliers; patient-level data is not downloaded by researchers.
- Only aggregate, anonymised results leave the environment after independent output checks.
- All activity and study code are transparently logged and publicly visible, supporting audit and public trust. [\[opensafely.org\]](https://opensafely.org)

## 6) Opt-out choices

- Type 1 Opt-out (GP practice level): If you do not want your GP data used for research and planning via OpenSAFELY, you can register a Type 1 Opt-out with Newtons Practice. Contact us (details below) to request and submit the form; we will record your preference in your GP record. [National-data-opt-out and Summary Care Record - Newtons Practice](#)
- National Data Opt-out (NDO): Applied to OpenSAFELY studies on a project-specific basis, alongside Type 1 Opt-out being applied by default to approved studies. [\[lmc.org.uk\]](#)

Important: Opt-outs affect the use of your data for secondary uses (research/planning). They do not affect direct care (e.g., referrals, prescriptions, vaccinations).

## 7) Who can access outputs?

Only approved users vetted by or on behalf of NHS England (with professional oversight from bodies including BMA/RCGP for the GP IT Committee) can run queries, and they receive only anonymised, aggregate outputs after checks. [\[digital.nhs.uk\]](#)

## 8) How long is data kept in the service?

OpenSAFELY operates for the pilot period defined by the Directions (currently to 31 March 2027). Retention within the platform is governed by NHS England's policies and project-specific approvals; only aggregate outputs are released outside the secure environment. [\[digital.nhs.uk\]](#)

## 9) Learn more

- NHS England – OpenSAFELY Data Analytics Service (DPN & overview): [digital.nhs.uk/.../opensafely-data-analytics-service](#)
  - OpenSAFELY (how your data is protected & transparency): [opensafely.org](#)
  - What practices were asked to publish (LMC guidance & wording): [Londonwide LMCs: OpenSAFELY data extraction requirements](#)
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