

The hospital welcomes comments and suggestions from patients and carers to help us to improve our service. Pick up a Talk to us leaflet or visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk) to find out how to give feedback. Alternatively, the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provide on-the-spot advice and help with any concerns you may have

## Contact details

### **PALS/Patient Relations Office**

Level 2 Main Entrance  
Royal Berkshire Hospital  
London Road  
Reading RG1 5AN  
Tel: 0118 322 8338

### **Information Governance Office**

Physio East  
Royal Berkshire Hospital  
London Road  
Reading RG1 5AN  
Tel: 0118 322 5364

### **Chief Executive's Office**

Royal Berkshire Hospital  
London Road  
Reading RG1 5AN  
Tel: 0118 322 7230

### **Medical Records Supervisor**

North Block  
Royal Berkshire Hospital  
London Road  
Reading RG1 5AN  
Tel: 0118 322 7057

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust  
London Road  
Reading  
Berkshire RG1 5AN  
0118 322 5111 (switchboard)  
Visit our website [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

Your information and  
what we use it for  
A guide for patients

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In order to properly care for you, we ask you to supply us with information. Much of this is very personal and you have every right to be concerned that we do not abuse the trust you place in us and that we keep such information private and confidential.

The Caldicott Report requires the Trust to tell you how we use the information that we collect about you.

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*In March 1996, the Department of Health published guidance on the protection and use of patient information. The Chief Medical Officer established a Caldicott Committee to review the transfer of all patient identifiable information from NHS organisations to other NHS and non-NHS bodies. The committee was chaired by Dame Fiona Caldicott and the recommendations published in December 1997. The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust has a Caldicott Guardian, who is responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Caldicott Report in this Trust.*

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## **What do I do if I think the information you have about me is incorrect?**

It is absolutely essential that the information we have about you is correct. If you suspect something is wrongly recorded, then in the first instance you should tell the doctor, who will decide whether to make a note on your file. However, you must remember that your medical record is a complete record, and as such, should not be amended or parts of it destroyed so the new or amended information will just be added to whatever's there.

A good example of this might be that you have recently changed addresses. This does not mean that the previous addresses recorded on your file are incorrect as they were correct at the time of recording, so will stay as they are. However, we will need your correct current address, as well as up to date details of your GP.

Please check that the details we hold on our computer system are correct, with either the receptionist of your clinic, or with the ward clerk if you are an inpatient.

## **I'm not entirely happy with some aspects of the way the hospital uses my information, what can I do?**

In the first instance, you should always talk to the doctor in charge of your care.

If you are still unsure, or feel that your concerns have not been addressed, then you may wish to contact the Information Governance Office on 0118 322 5364 during office hours, or in writing to the address listed below.

information printed from a number of computer systems. For example, our pathology system computer will have a record of your blood tests but the results of such tests are printed out and are attached to your main paper medical record.

### **What if I wish to see my medical record?**

You have the right to see any computerised or paper files that we may have about you. If you wish to view your medical record then you must discuss this with the consultant or doctor in charge of your case.

The consultant or doctor is the most appropriate person to explain anything in your medical record in more detail, particularly regarding your illness and any treatment you may be having. They will also answer any questions you may have.

Formal access to view your medical record can be arranged by contacting the Medical Records Supervisor, who will arrange for a suitable date and time for you to view your record. There is no charge for this service.

You may wish to have a copy of your records. A small administrative charge will be made (currently £10 for a copy of computer records and up to £50 for paper records) and we will supply such a copy within 40 days of receiving your formal request form. Please contact the Medical Records Supervisor for an application form to access health records or you can download the form from the Trust website [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/patients\\_\\_visitors/health\\_records.asp](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/patients__visitors/health_records.asp)  
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### **Your visit to hospital**

If at any time during your visit to the hospital you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

All staff that work for the hospital wear identity badges. You will generally be under the care of a consultant and you will also come into contact with doctors, nurses, clerical staff and ancillary workers such as porters and cleaners.

All staff, without exception, understand that information about you is confidential.

The staff that are involved in your care are always willing to discuss your illness and treatment and to answer any questions you may have. You may find it helpful to write down your questions so that you don't forget them. You may also take a relative or friend into the consultation with you.

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

The main reason why we ask for information is to be able to give you the best care and treatment and to enable other healthcare professionals to continue to look after you in the best possible way.

Every year at our hospital, doctors treat over 3 million outpatients and over 60,000 inpatients, as well as some 70,000 accidents and emergencies and over 4,500 births. The information we collect on all of these patients enables us to plan our services and to detect any trends in illnesses.

We are also able to monitor our performance and your information helps our staff to review the care that we provide, to ensure it is of the highest quality. Clinical audits are carried out to

gain knowledge on the standard of care services, and the results of such clinical audits are used to change practice to improve the quality of care in the Trust.

While attending the hospital, you may be asked to take part in a research project. This will be discussed with you by your consultant or by the researcher, and you are given the opportunity to ask questions. Your participation in a trial is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, please feel free to say so - this will not affect the treatment and care you receive.

We may also use your information for training and educating staff, but in these cases personal details such as your name and address are not included. However, your name and other personal details will be passed on to staff in a variety of specialist areas, who may be involved in your care and treatment.

We also have a legal duty to pass on your information to the relevant bodies, for example, to notify the registrar of any births and deaths. We also have to send details of our activity to the Department of Health, and information on cancer patients is sent for Cancer Registration. This helps the government plan the future provision of health services nationally.

### **Does the hospital send every bit of information about me to others?**

Wherever possible, specific personal information, like your name and address, is removed from the information that we send to others. This is to protect your identity.

In all cases, we only give information to those who are authorised to receive it. In most cases, this will include your GP and any authorised third parties, for example Social Services, or

another hospital, if your care and rehabilitation is to be continued elsewhere.

All information concerning you and your illness is confidential. No information will be given out without your permission, except to other professionals concerned with your case. This includes giving information to your friends and relatives. Without your permission we will simply not pass the information on.

### **Where do you keep all this information about me?**

Everything about you and your attendances at this hospital, including medical and clinical details, are stored in a paper file that is called your medical record. The doctors and nurses use this file to record details of your treatment.

Some areas of the hospital keep separate records. For example, the maternity department will have separate records if you've given birth here. The Accident and Emergency department will also keep separate paper records if you've ever been seen in casualty, but a copy will also be placed in your main medical record.

Some forms of records are not kept in the main file, for example, X-rays. Although these are part of your main record, they are normally stored separately, although they are made available to a doctor if he/she requires them.

Some records are kept totally separate and are never shared with anyone outside of the special areas in which they are used. This would include records of visits to the Department of Sexual Health and fertility and family planning records.

The majority of the information about you is therefore kept in paper form in your medical file. This will include paper copies of