**How sharing patient data with NHS Digital helps the NHS and you**

The NHS needs data about the patients it treats in order to plan and deliver its services and to ensure that care and treatment provided is safe and effective. The General Practice Data for Planning and Research data collection will help the NHS to improve health and care services for everyone by collecting patient data that can be used to do this. For example patient data can help the NHS to:

* monitor the long-term safety and effectiveness of care
* plan how to deliver better health and care services
* prevent the spread of infectious diseases
* identify new treatments and medicines through health research

GP practices already share patient data for these purposes, but this new data collection will be more efficient and effective.

We have agreed to share the patient data we look after in our practice with NHS Digital who will securely store, analyse, publish and share this patient data to improve health and care services for everyone. This includes:

* informing and developing health and social care policy
* planning and commissioning health and care services
* taking steps to protect public health (including managing and monitoring the coronavirus pandemic)
* in exceptional circumstances, providing you with individual care
* enabling healthcare and scientific research

This means that we can get on with looking after our patients and NHS Digital can provide controlled access to patient data to the NHS and other organisations who need to use it to improve health and care for everyone.

Contributing to research projects will benefit us all as better and safer treatments are introduced more quickly and effectively without compromising your privacy and confidentiality.

NHS Digital has engaged with the [British Medical Association (BMA)](http://www.bma.org.uk/), [Royal College of GPs (RCGP)](http://www.rcgp.org.uk/) and the [National Data Guardian (NDG)](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-data-guardian) to ensure relevant safeguards are in place for patients and GP practices.

**What data is shared about you with NHS Digital**

This data will be shared from 1 July 2021. Data may be shared from the GP medical records about:

* any living patient registered at a GP practice in England when the collection started - this includes children and adults
* any patient who died after this data sharing started, and was previously registered at a GP practice in England when the data collection started

We will not share your name or where you live. Any other data that could directly identify you, for example your NHS number, General Practice Local Patient Number, full postcode and date of birth, is replaced with unique codes which are produced by de-identification software before the data is shared with NHS Digital.

This process is called pseudonymisation and means that no one will be able to directly identify you in the data. The diagram below helps to explain what this means. Using the terms in the diagram, the data we share would be described as de-personalised.