

Cairn Medical Practice

Policy for Collection, Use, Storage and Destruction of Patient Information

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Version History

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1 Introduction:

- 1.1 This document outlines the scope of information that Cairn Medical Practice collects data about its patients; how that information is processed, stored, shared and, ultimately, disposed of.

2 Purpose of Collecting Data on Patients

- 2.1 It is necessary to collect data about patients that is both medical and non-medical in nature; such information may include things like contact telephone numbers, details of next of kin, carers, employment type, requests for access to records by solicitors, insurance companies etc.

2.2 The information is required because:

- a) To ensure robust, safe, care, records are needed of all consultations, prescriptions, referrals and discussions about a patient's health.
- b) Accurate records provide an audit trail to prove that the patient consented to the practice passing information on to outside agencies.
- c) Accurate next of kin/carers data enables the practice to contact appropriate people in an emergency.
- d) Accurate address/contact phone numbers allow the practice to contact patients about their medical wellbeing.

3 What Information is Collected?

- 3.1 Apart from a patient's medical history, which is imported from their previous medical practice, the following data is collected.
- 3.2 Registration Details – name, date of birth, gender identity, address, contact telephone numbers, emergency contact,
- 3.3 Medical Summary. Previous medical practice, previous significant medical history, smoking status, exercise levels, alcohol consumption data.
- 3.4 A patient's previous medical record is summarised to permit accurate coding of medical history; any paper notes are scanned into the electronic record and, following a quality/integrity check of the scanned file, the paper notes are destroyed.

4 Period of Retention

- 4.1 The non-medical patient information outlined at 3.2 will be added to the patients' electronic medical records and then paper copies will be destroyed.
- 4.2 Upon leaving the practice, the patient's electronic medical records are archived through National Services Scotland (NSS), Practitioner Services (PSD) in Aberdeen, ready to be sent to the new practice. Any paper medical records are sent back to PSD for archive/onwards transmission to the new practice.
- 4.3 NSS retains patient records for the NHS under its own policy and that is not covered by Cairn Medical Practice's internal policies.

5 Sharing Information.

5.1 External Organizations

5.1.1 No patient identifiable medical information will be passed to any organization outside of the NHS, or not acting under contract on behalf of the NHS, without one of the following being conditions being met:

- a) The explicit consent of the patient, either direct or by giving a 3rd party consent.
- b) Where mandated under statute (diseases that have to be notified etc).
- c) An order of the Court.
- d) A decision by a clinician (documented) that passing the data on is in the best interest of the patient
- e) A decision by a clinician (documented) that passing the data on is in the best interest of Public Health.

5.2 Research.

5.2.1 Anonymised Information may be processed by organizations within the NHS, or acting for the NHS under a Data Processing contract, to provide data in support of medical research, drug effectiveness or for other reasons necessary to monitor or ensure Public Health. Currently, we provide data to 3 different research projects: SPIRE, THIN and SHARE.

5.2.2 SPIRE (Scottish Primary Care information REsource) is administered for the NHS by NSS; data is anonymised so that no individual can be identified. Patients can opt out of SPIRE, more details are available here: <http://spire.scot/your-questions-answered/>

5.2.3 THIN (The Health Improvement Network) is administered by Cegedim on contract to the NHS. Cegedim is the company that provides our clinical consulting system, Vision. THIN aims to improve healthcare in many ways but lately they have developed software tools that help to provide early warning of patients at risk of cancer and other major conditions. Patients can opt out of THIN; more details are available here: <http://www.cairnmedical.co.uk/website/S56006/files/THIN%20Poster%20.pdf>

5.2.4 SHARE is a new initiative to establish a register of people living in Scotland willing to provide secure access to their health records. This access can be incredibly useful when it comes to developing new treatments and cures for heart disease and other conditions. Patients are not automatically opted in to SHARE; please see their website if you wish to opt in or withdraw your consent. <http://www.goshare.org.uk/>

5.3 Communication

5.3.1 Consent for communication is obtained at initial registration. We may try to contact you using any communication medium that you have made available to us. Please note that you are responsible for ensuring that we have up to date contact information. Legitimate reasons to contact you include:

- a) Contacting a patient to arrange, cancel or re-arrange an appointment.
- b) Contacting a patient to discuss test results, referrals or to conduct a review.
- c) Contacting a patient for a telephone or other electronic consultation.
- d) Contacting a patient to issue an electronic confirmation/reminder about appointments.

6 Confidentiality and Disclosure

- 6.1 Under normal circumstances, even within the NHS, the Practice will not discuss you or your medical history with anyone that does not have a need to know in order to act in your best interest and safeguard your health. Under conditions of extreme, a GP may decide that the importance of disclosure outweighs the need for confidentiality. That decision is never taken lightly and will be documented in your records.
- 6.2 There is a legal requirement placed upon GPs to disclose certain information should they consider that a patient is engaged in certain illegal activities, for example terrorism, or for the purpose of safeguarding a vulnerable Adult or Child.

7 Retention of Data and the Right to be Forgotten

- 7.1 GDPR incorporates a Right to be Forgotten; however, the Practice does not use consent as the legal means to collect and process your data. Moreover, your health records remain relevant for your entire life: to delete them would be irresponsible; for example, years after being prescribed a drug, it may become known that there are negative health implications and we may have to contact you to ensure that you have not been impacted. Once you have left the care of the Practice, we return your records to NSS, PSD in Aberdeen for archive.

8 Review of Policy

- 8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually, or as required in between scheduled reviews, and published on the Practice Website.

WP Munro
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22 May 2018