

***NHS Blood and Transplant***

# **Policies and Procedures**

**Information Charter**

***[POL13]***

Policy Reference	<i>[POL13]</i>
Title	NHSBT Information Charter
Approved by	<i>Information Governance Management Forum</i>
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## NHS Blood and Transplant Information Charter

### Your information is very important to us!

If you enrol as a blood donor, or as a potential organ donor, we will need to hold some information about you. We will also hold information about you if you receive an organ transplant, or if we perform laboratory tests or give advice to your hospital or GP.

### What information do we hold?

Over time we may collect a variety of information about you. This will depend on whether you are a blood donor, if you are on the Organ Donor Register or if you are a patient.

It is important that we can identify you correctly, and communicate with you when necessary, so we will collect personal details about you which may include your:

- name
- address
- date of birth
- telephone number
- email address
- occupation
- donor ID number
- NHS number
- ethnic group.

To find out more about what information we hold about you, please see the following leaflets:

[Data Protection: A Guide for Blood Donors](#)  
[The Organ Donor Register leaflet](#)  
[Giving Consent for the Use of Your Information](#)

### How will we use your information?

In addition to the specific uses described in the above leaflets, your information helps us to:

- **Comply with the law.** We are required to keep records of donors, and of transplant operations and recipients
- **Improve our service.** We regularly review all aspects of our blood and transplant services, including the way in which our forms are filled in, or the manner in which our healthcare professionals carry out their interviews. Reports are always presented with all personal details removed;
- **Carry out research,** to improve our knowledge about the donor population. By looking at the sorts of people who become blood and organ donors or receive transplants we

can learn how to meet their expectations of us, and identify opportunities for recruiting and retaining more donors. This is essential to help us collect adequate supplies of donated blood, tissues and organs.

## **Our Guarantees to You**

- *we will only ever ask for information we need in order to provide our service*
- *we will only keep your information for as long as necessary*
- *we will keep your information securely*
- *we will not make your personal information available for commercial use*
- *we will only share your information with other organisations if this is allowed or required by law, and will normally seek your consent first*

## **Your questions answered**

### **How will my information be protected?**

NHSBT is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 1998. The Act controls the way in which we use your personal information, including how it is obtained, recorded, held, used, shared and disposed of. We are committed to maintaining our compliance with the Act.

### **How can I access my records?**

Details of how to do this are in the leaflets listed above. For more information please contact [Customer Services](#) at the address given at the end of this document.

### **Can I find out information about somebody else?**

No, the Data Protection Act 1998 only gives you the right to see your own personal information. Just as we have an obligation to protect your information, the same applies to anybody else's.

The Access to Health Records 1990 allows deceased persons' legal representatives the right to see health records. This right does not automatically apply to any family member. Please [contact us](#) if you need more advice about this.

### **How about information about NHS Blood and Transplant?**

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, you can ask us for any corporate or business information that we hold, and we will provide it as long as it is not covered by any of the exemptions in the Act.

You also have the right under the Environmental Information Regulations Act 2004, to request access to information we hold about the environment.

Although most requests for information are free of charge, in some instances an administrative fee may need to be paid. If this is the case, we will tell you and if possible help you to reduce the scope of any request to avoid paying a fee.

For further information on Freedom of Information, please [click here](#).

## **How long does it take to receive information?**

We will provide your information as quickly as we can once we have all the necessary information and fees, if any. Under the Data Protection Act we must supply personal data within 40 calendar days, and the deadline for corporate information issued under the Freedom of Information Act is 20 working days.

## **Can information be withheld?**

The Data Protection Act allows us to withhold personal data whose release would cause significant damage or distress to anyone. This decision can only be made by a senior clinician.

The Freedom of Information Act has a number of exemptions and conditions under which information can be withheld, in order to provide a balance between your right to know and the need to protect personal privacy and other issues of confidentiality such as national security. If we withhold information we will explain our reasons for doing so, as required by law.

## **How can I make a request for information?**

Please make your request in writing. If you are applying for your own personal data we will need your signature to help us confirm your identity, but Freedom of Information requests are welcome by email. The addresses are at the end of this document and more information can be found [here](#).

## **What information do you need from me?**

We need to keep our information up to date and as accurate as possible. Please let us know if there are any mistakes or gaps in the information we hold about you, and also if there are any changes, such as a change of surname, address or telephone number.

Please also tell us if you do not wish us to contact you, whether by letter, telephone or email. We can prevent routine contacts, but will still try to get in touch if we have important information about your health or wellbeing.

## **How can I contact you?**

You can contact us:

By email to	customer.services@nhsbt.nhs.uk
By telephone to	0300 123 23 23
By post to	Customer Services NHS Blood and Transplant Colindale Avenue LONDON NW9 5BG

**If you would like to know more...**

For independent advice about Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Environmental Information, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Phone: 08456 30 60 60 or 01625 54 57 45 Fax: 01625 524510

Website: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)