



## Care Portal: Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Care Portal?

The Care Portal is a secure computer system that provides health and care staff with a selected view of a patient's personal information contained in different health and care systems.

At the moment, every health and social care organisation that you use has a different set of patient or service user records for you. These records may duplicate information or one record might hold information about your treatment, care and support that another one doesn't. To provide the best care to you as a patient or service user it is essential that health and social care professionals have access to the most up-to-date information

The Care Portal enables users to view an integrated care record for the patient. It brings together selected patient information from multiple organisations and systems in real time.

It can also notify users when relevant events occur as well as providing secure communication between care providers. The Care Portal does not create a new record and data is not stored in the Care Portal.

### What kind of information will be shared?

The Care Portal provides a view of selected personal information about each patient or service user so that whenever you are being treated or cared for by the NHS or social care services the people looking after you will have the most up-to-date information. Examples of the information that could be included are:

- **Address and telephone number** – so we have one set of contact details for you.
- **Diagnosis list** – to make sure your health or social care professional has a complete record of your care.
- **Allergies** – to make sure you aren't prescribed or given any medicines you could have an adverse reaction to.
- **Test results** – to speed up your treatment and care.
- **Referrals, clinic letters and discharge information** – to make sure the people caring for you have all the information they need about treatment you are having.

Records will be viewable only if they are relevant and add value. Certain very sensitive data, such as sexual health records will not be viewable in the Care Portal. Other sensitive information can be 'sealed off' (for example, certain mental health data) and will only be viewable if a health or care professional provides a reason for needing to access it and this will be audited. The decisions about which information can be viewed are taken by the organisation that holds the information in each system that is linked up.

Information contained in paper files will not be viewable, nor will historic information that is not held electronically. Individual organisations have plans in place for moving to all records being electronic, but this is separate to the Care Portal programme.

### Why do you need to share my information?

The Care Portal will provide health and social care professionals directly involved in your care access to the most up-to-date information about you.

Information is already shared by phone and paper records on request. The Care Portal make this information



available quicker and will free up professionals to spend time with the patient rather than chasing down paperwork. It will mean that patients don't have to repeat themselves when they see different professionals. It will also enable care to be provided in a more coordinated way and could avoid repeat tests and procedures being done.

### **Can anybody see my records?**

No. Your health and social care records will still be confidential. They will only be looked at by people who are directly involved in your care. We won't share your information with anyone who doesn't need it to provide treatment, care and support to you. Your details will be kept safe. They will not be made public, passed on to a third party who is not directly involved in your care, or be used for any other purpose.

### **Who can amend or add information to the Care Portal?**

The Care Portal is a "view only" system which draws information from several health and social care systems. Information cannot be added or amended on the Care Portal. Health and social care professional can still update your records within their own systems; any changes made in these systems will be reflected in information in the Care Portal.

### **How do I know my records are kept secure?**

By law, everyone working in, or on behalf of, the NHS and social care must respect your privacy and keep all information about you safe.

The Care Portal has an audit function which means it tracks everyone who has accessed a health and social care record, the time and date when they accessed it and the information they were viewing. The laws on data protection are clear and we take them very seriously.

### **Can I opt out of my records being shared?**

Yes, you can choose to block your information being viewed in the Care Portal. It is your choice, but sharing your medical and social care information through the Care Portal will make it easier to provide the best quality care and support for you. If all relevant health and social care professionals do not have access to the most appropriate information it could affect your care. If you opt out and you are unconscious in A&E in an emergency, professionals will not be able to access the information on the Care Portal so this might compromise your care.

### **Can I access the Care Portal to see my own records?**

By 2020, the NHS will have to enable patients to see their own records. In Lincolnshire, we are starting to work on developing our Patient Portal now. Through the Patient Portal, patients will be able to see a view of their records - this could be checking when appointments are, what medication they are on and how referrals for their care are progressing. In time, they will be able to use the Patient Portal to update their own care records, for instance if they are monitoring their blood sugar or blood pressure, and they should be able to upload information about how they are managing their condition and their preferences for their care. This will allow patients to be more actively involved in the decisions made about their own care.

Patients have the right under Section 7 of the Data Protection Act (1998) to request access to any information that an organisation holds about them. Each individual organisation that contributes information to the Care Portal has a responsibility to handle these "Subject Access Requests".



Health & Care  
#Lincstogether

Should you wish to access your records this way, contact the organisation who holds the part of the record you are interested in directly, e.g. your GP, hospital, mental health trust or social care team.

### **Who runs the Care Portal?**

The Care Portal was first developed through the Lincolnshire Health and Care Programme (LHAC). It is now part of the Lincolnshire Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) and the STP IMT Enabler Group oversees the development of the Care Portal. All health organisations in the county are involved, as well as the County Council, the Ambulance Service and the independent care sector. The Care Portal technology is sited at Lincoln County Hospital. Safeguards are in place to ensure that all information is handled safely and securely. A copy of the fair processing notice can be found on our website.