

Executive summary

1. As custodian of personal information relating to your medical treatment, we must treat that information in accordance with all applicable law and guidance. This Privacy Notice provides you with a detailed overview of how we will manage your data, from the point at which it is gathered and onwards. We will use that information for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to, providing you with care and treatment, sharing it with other medical professionals and seeking feedback on your patient experience. We may also, with your specific agreement, contact you with marketing materials. This Privacy Notice will give you all the details you need on how we use your information, and how we will comply with the law in doing so.

2. In addition, you have a number of rights as a data subject. You can, for instance, seek access to your medical information, object to us using your information in particular ways and request rectification of any information which is inaccurate or deletion of information which is no longer required (subject to certain exceptions). This Privacy Notice also sets out your rights in respect of your personal information, and how to exercise them.

3. For ease of reference, this Privacy Notice is broken into separate sections below with headings which will help you to navigate through the document. We are also open to improvement, and if you have any feedback on this notice then do please feel free to contact us.

Introduction

This Privacy Notice sets out details of the information that The Hearing Centre and the clinicians responsible for your treatment (including their medical secretaries) may collect from you and how that information may be used. Please take your time to read this Privacy Notice carefully.

About us

In this Privacy Notice we use "we" or "us" or "our" to refer to The Hearing Centre who is using your personal information, and the clinicians who provide your treatment.

The Hearing Centre is the trading name of The London Road Hearing Centre Ltd.

Registered in England under company number 06645590.

Registered address: 96 London Road, Leicester, LE2 0QS

Email address: info@hearingcentre.com

Telephone number: 0116 254 3909

If you would like further information about any of the matters in this Privacy Notice or have any other questions about how we collect, store or use your personal information, please contact us using the details above.

Your personal data and clinicians

As a patient of The Hearing Centre, your treatment may be provided by a clinician who is a medical practitioner. For ease of reference, we refer to them simply as 'clinicians' throughout this Privacy Notice. Those clinicians make decisions about what information is collected

about you, and may maintain their own set of medical records in relation to the treatment that they provide. They are a Data Controller in respect of your personal information which they hold within those records, meaning that they must comply with the data protection legislation and relevant guidance when handling your personal information. To the extent relevant to their practice, you can expect clinicians (including their medical secretaries) to handle your information in line with this Privacy Notice. This includes using your personal information as set out in more detail below.

Clinicians who work with The Hearing Centre (including their medical secretaries) may process your personal information off site (medical or non-medical).

If you want to find out more about the arrangements between The Hearing Centre and clinicians for handling your information please contact us. If you have any concerns about the way your clinician has handled your personal information please contact us using the details above.

What personal information do we collect and use from patients?

The personal information that we collect will depend on your relationship with us. We will collect different information depending on whether or not you are already a patient of The Hearing Centre.

We may use “special categories of personal information” (otherwise known as "special categories of data") about you, such as information relating to your physical and mental health. For example, if you are a patient we will need to use information about your health in order to treat you.

If you provide personal information to us about other individuals (including medical or financial information) you should inform the individual about the contents of this Privacy Notice. We will process such information in accordance with this Privacy Notice.

In addition, you should note that in the event you amend data which we already hold about you (for instance by amending a pre-populated form) then we will update our systems to reflect the amendments. Our systems will continue to store historical data.

Personal information

As a patient of The Hearing Centre, the personal information we hold about you may include the following:

- a) Name
- b) Contact details, such as postal address, email address and telephone number (including mobile number)
- c) Occupation
- d) Emergency contact details, including next of kin
- e) Background referral details

Special Categories Personal Information

As a patient of The Hearing Centre, we will hold information relating to your medical treatment which is known as a special category of personal data under the law, meaning that it must be handled even more sensitively. The special categories of personal information we hold about you may include the following:

- a) Details of your current or former physical or mental health. This may include information about any healthcare you have received (both from The Hearing Centre directly and other healthcare providers such as GPs or hospitals (private and/or NHS)) or need, including about clinic and hospital visits and medicines administered. We provide further details below on the manner in which we handle such information.
- b) Details of services you have received from us
- c) Details of any genetic data or biometric data relating to you

The confidentiality of your medical information is important to The Hearing Centre. We make every effort to prevent unauthorised access to and use of information relating to your current or former physical and mental health. In doing so, The Hearing Centre complies with UK data protection law, including the Data Protection Act 2018, and all applicable medical confidentiality guidelines issued by professional bodies including, but not limited to, the General Medical Council and the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

From 25 May 2018, the current Data Protection Act will be replaced by the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and a new Data Protection Act. All uses of The Hearing Centre information will comply with the GDPR and the new Data Protection Act from that date onwards.

How do we collect your information?

We may collect personal information from a number of different sources including, but not limited to:

- a) GPs
- b) Other hospitals, both NHS and private
- c) Commissioners of healthcare services
- d) Clinicians (including their medical secretaries)

Directly from you

21. Information may be collected directly from you when:

- a) You enter into a contract with The Hearing Centre for the provision of healthcare services
- b) You use those services
- c) You complete enquiry forms on the clinic website
- d) You submit a query to us including through our website, by email or by social media
- e) you correspond with us by letter, email, telephone (incoming and outgoing calls from/to patients may be recorded) or social media, including where you reference the clinic in a public social media post

f) You take part in our marketing activities

From other healthcare organisations

Our patients will usually receive healthcare from other organisations in addition to The Hearing Centre, and so in order to provide you with the best treatment possible we may have to collect personal information about you from other organisations. These may include:

- a) Medical records from your GP
- b) Medical records from your clinician (including their medical secretaries)
- c) Medical records from the NHS or any private healthcare organisation

Medical records include information about your diagnosis, clinic and hospital visits and medicines administered.

From third parties

As detailed in the previous section, it is often necessary to seek information from other healthcare organisations. We may also collect information about you from third parties when:

- a) You are referred to us for the provision of services including healthcare services
- b) We liaise with your current or former employer, health professional or other treatment or benefit provider
- c) We liaise with your family
- d) We liaise with your insurance policy provider
- e) We deal with experts (including medical experts) and other service providers about services you have received or are receiving from us
- f) We deal with NHS health service bodies about services you have received or are receiving from us
- g) We liaise with debt collection agencies

How will we communicate with you?

In order to communicate with you, we are likely to do this by telephone, SMS, email, and / or post. If we contact you using the telephone number(s) which you have provided (landline and/or mobile), and you are not available which results in the call being directed to a voicemail and/or answering service, we may leave a voice message on your voicemail and/or answering service as appropriate.

However:

- a) to ensure that we provide you with timely updates and reminders in relation to your healthcare (including basic administration information and appointment information (including reminders), we may communicate with you by SMS and/or unencrypted email (where you have provided us with your email address) in each case where you have expressed a preference in the client record form to be contacted by SMS and / or email.

b) to provide you with your medical information (including test results and other clinical updates) and/or invoicing information, we may communicate with you by email (which will be encrypted) where you have provided us with your email address and have expressed a preference in the client record form to be contacted by email.

c) If we have your mobile number or your email address we may use this method of communication to contact you regarding patient surveys which are for the purpose of improving our service or monitoring outcomes and are not a form of marketing.

Please note that although providing your mobile number and email address and stating a preference to be communicated by a particular method will be taken as an affirmative confirmation that you are happy for us to contact you in that manner, we are not relying on your consent to process your personal data in order to correspond with you about your treatment. As set out further below, processing your personal data for those purposes is justified on the basis that it is necessary to provide you with healthcare services

Surveys

As detailed above, we may contact you to ask you to participate in surveys regarding your treatment with The Hearing Centre. The surveys will largely be sent post-treatment by email or post. This is not a form of marketing and the surveys do not try to sell you any further products or services; it is solely to gather information relating to your experience of The Hearing Centre, for the purposes of improving the quality and safety of the services we offer to future patients. It is necessary for us to process your personal data in order to contact you with these surveys, on the basis of our appropriate business needs and to improve the quality of the healthcare services we offer (as set out under purpose 8 below). Participation in the surveys is entirely voluntary. You may decide not to complete the surveys and you will have the option to unsubscribe from receiving further survey invitations. You may also be given the opportunity to proactively opt into receiving a call back to further discuss your survey responses. These are all matters entirely for you.

What are the purposes for which your information is used?

We may 'process' your information for a number of different purposes, which is essentially the language used by the law to mean using your data. Each time we use your data we must have a legal justification to do so. The particular justification will depend on the purpose of the proposed use of your data. When the information that we process is classed as “special category of personal information”, we must have a specific additional legal justification in order to use it as proposed.

Generally we will rely on the following legal justifications, or 'grounds':

a) Taking steps at your request so that you can enter into a contract with The Hearing Centre and/or clinician to receive healthcare services from us.

b) For the purposes of providing you with healthcare pursuant to a contract between you and The Hearing Centre and/or clinician. We will rely on this for activities such as supporting your medical treatment or care and other benefits, supporting your doctor, nurse, carer or other healthcare professional and providing other services to you.

- c) We have an appropriate business need to process your personal information and such business need does not cause harm to you. We will rely on this for activities such as quality assurance, maintaining our business records, developing and improving our products and services and monitoring outcomes.
- d) We have a legal or regulatory obligation to use such personal information.
- e) We need to use such personal information to establish, exercise or defend our legal rights.
- f) You have provided your consent to our use of your personal information.

Note that failure to provide your information further to a contractual requirement with us or a clinician may mean that we are unable to set you up as a patient or facilitate the provision of your healthcare on The Hearing Centre systems.

We provide further detail on these grounds in the sections below.

Appropriate business needs

One legal ground for processing personal data is where we do this in pursuit of legitimate interests and those interests are not overridden by your privacy rights. Where we refer to use for our appropriate business needs, we are relying on this legal ground.

Special categories of personal information includes information about you:

- a) Health
- b) Genetic or biometric information

The right to object to other uses of your personal data

You have a range of rights in respect of your personal data, this includes the right to object to The Hearing Centre using your personal information in a particular way

(such as sharing that information with third parties), and we must stop using it in that way unless specific exceptions apply. This includes, for example, if it is necessary to defend a legal claim brought against us, or it is otherwise necessary for the purposes of your ongoing treatment. You will find details of our legal grounds for each of our processing purposes below. We have set out individually those purposes for which we will use your personal information, and under each one we set out the legal justifications, or grounds, which allow us to do so. You will note that we have set out a legal ground, as well as an 'additional' legal ground for special categories of personal information. This is because we have to demonstrate additional legal grounds where we are using information which relates to a person's healthcare, as we will be the majority of the times we use your personal information.

Purpose 1: To set you up as a patient on The Hearing Centre systems

As is common with most business, we have to carry out necessary checks in order for you to become a patient. These include standard background checks, which we cannot perform without using your personal information.

Legal ground: Taking the necessary steps so that you can enter into a contract with us for the delivery of healthcare.

Additional legal ground for special categories of personal information: The use is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest.

Purpose 2: To provide you with healthcare and related services

Clearly, the reason you come to us is to provide you with healthcare, and so we have to use your personal information for that.

Legal grounds:

- a) Providing you with healthcare and related services
- b) Fulfilling our contract with you for the delivery of healthcare

43. Additional legal grounds for special categories of personal information:

- a) We need to use the data in order to provide healthcare services to you
- b) The use is necessary to protect your vital interests where you are physically or legally incapable of giving consent

Purpose 3: For account settlement purposes

We will use your personal information in order to ensure that your account and billing is fully accurate and up-to-date

Legal grounds:

- a) Our providing you healthcare and other related services
- b) Fulfilling our contract with you for the delivery of healthcare
- c) Our having an appropriate business need to use your information which does not overly prejudice you

Additional legal grounds for special categories of personal information:

- a) We need to use the data in order to provide healthcare services to you
- b) The use is necessary in order for us to establish, exercise or defend our legal rights

Purpose 4: For medical audit/research purposes

Medical research

The Hearing Centre also participates in medical research and shares data with ethically approved third party research organisations.

We will share your personal data only to the extent that it is necessary to do so in assisting research and as permitted by law. Some research projects and/or registries have received statutory approval such that consent may not be required in order to use your personal data. In those circumstances, your personal data will be shared on the basis that:

Legal grounds:

- a) We have a legitimate interest in helping with medical research and have put appropriate safeguards in place to protect your privacy

Additional legal grounds for special categories of personal information:

b) The processing is necessary in the public interest for statistical and scientific research purposes. In the event that consent is required then either the research organisations will obtain this from you themselves, and so any questions in that regard should be directed to them, or we will take consent from you.

Purpose 5: Communicating with you and resolving any queries or complaints that you might have.

From time to time, patients may raise queries, or even complaints, with The Hearing Centre and we take those communications very seriously. It is important that we resolve such matters fully and properly, and so we will need to use your personal information in order to do so.

Legal grounds:

- a) Our providing you with healthcare and other related services
- b) Our having an appropriate business need to use your information which does not overly prejudice you

Additional legal grounds for special categories of personal information:

- a) The use is necessary for the provision of healthcare or treatment pursuant to a contract with a health professional
- b) The use is necessary in order for us to establish, exercise or defend our legal rights

Purpose 6: Communicating with any other individual that you ask us to update about your care and updating other healthcare professionals about your care.

In addition, other healthcare professionals or organisations may need to know about your treatment in order for them to provide you with safe and effective care, and so we may need to share your personal information with them. Further details on the third parties who may need access to your information is set out at section below.

Legal grounds:

- a) Our providing you with healthcare and other related services
- b) We have a legitimate interest in ensuring that other healthcare professionals who are routinely involved in your care have a full picture of your treatment

Additional legal ground for special categories of personal information:

- a) We need to use the data in order to provide healthcare services to you
- b) The use is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest under UK law
- c) The use is necessary in order for us to establish, exercise or defend our legal rights

Purpose 7: Complying with our legal or regulatory obligations, and defending or exercising

Our legal rights

As a provider of healthcare, we are subject to a wide range of legal and regulatory responsibilities which is not possible to list fully here. We may be required by law or by regulators to provide personal information, and in which case we will have a legal responsibility to do so. From time to time, The Hearing Centre and its clinicians are also the subject of legal actions or complaints. In order to fully investigate and respond to those actions, it is necessary to access your personal information (although only to the extent that it is necessary and relevant to the subject-matter).

Legal grounds:

a) The use is necessary in order for us to comply with our legal obligations

Additional legal ground for special categories of personal information:

a) We need to use the data in order for others to provide informed healthcare services to you

b) The use is necessary for reasons of the provision of health or social care or treatment or the management of health or social care systems

c) The use is necessary for establishing, exercising or defending legal claims

Purpose 8: Providing improved quality, training and security (for example, with respect to recorded or monitored phone calls to our contact numbers) including conducting post treatment surveys

The Hearing Centre is a quality-conscious organisation, and always looking to learn from patients' experiences in order to improve the experience for future patients. With that in mind, we will use your personal information to identify where such improvements can be made, such as reviewing recorded phone calls to assess whether anything can be learnt and contacting you to seek your valuable thoughts on your experience with us.

Legal grounds:

a) Our having an appropriate business need to use your information which does not overly prejudice you

Additional legal ground for special categories of personal information:

a) We need to use the data in order to manage the healthcare services we deliver, including carrying out surveys (which are not a form of marketing) in order to identify and carry out any necessary improvements

Purpose 9: Managing our business operations such as maintaining accounting records, analysis of financial results, internal audit requirements, receiving professional advice (e.g. tax or legal advice)

In order to do this, we will not need to use your special categories of personal information and so we have not identified the additional ground to use your information for this purpose.

Legal grounds:

a) Our having an appropriate business need to use your information which does not overly prejudice you

Purpose 10: Provide marketing information to you (including information about other products and services offered by selected third-party partners) in accordance with preferences you have expressed in the client record form.

As a business, we need to carry out marketing but we are mindful of your rights and expectations in that regard. As a result, we will only provide you with marketing which is relevant to our business and only where you have specifically confirmed your consent to do so.

Legal grounds:

- a) Our having an appropriate business need to use your information which does not overly prejudice you
- b) You have provided your consent

Who do we share your information with?

From time to time, we may share your personal information within our group or with third parties.

We may share your personal information with other companies. This might be because we need to share information relating to your treatment within our group of companies.

Disclosures to third parties:

We may disclose your information to the third parties listed below for the purposes described in this Privacy Notice. This might include:

- a) A doctor, nurse, carer or any other healthcare professional involved in your treatment
- b) Other members of support staff involved in the delivery of your care eg admin staff and receptionists
- c) Anyone that you ask us to communicate with or provide as an emergency contact, for example your next of kin or carer
- d) NHS organisations, including NHS Resolution, NHS England, Department of Health
- e) Other private sector healthcare providers
- f) Your GP
- g) Your clinician (including their medical secretaries)
- h) Third parties who assist in the administration of your healthcare, such as insurance companies
- i) Private Healthcare Information Network
- j) National and other professional research/audit programmes and registries, as detailed under purpose 4 above
- k) Our insurers
- l) Debt collection agencies

m) Our third party services providers such as IT suppliers, actuaries, auditors, lawyers, marketing agencies, document management providers and tax advisers

n) Selected third parties in connection with any sale, transfer or disposal of our business

We may communicate with these third parties in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, email, post, fax and telephone.

What marketing activities do we carry out?

We may also use your personal information to provide you with information about products or services which may be of interest to you where you have provided your consent for us to do so.

If you no longer wish to receive marketing emails sent by us, you can click on the "unsubscribe" link that appears in all of our emails, otherwise you can always contact us using the details set out in this notice to update your contact preferences.

We may also provide your personal information to market research agencies for collecting your feedback which will be used to develop better products and services for you.

We have put in place appropriate measures to safeguard any information subject to profiling, particularly by ensuring that any information passed onto third party marketing agencies will be in an anonymous form so that you cannot be identified. You also have the right to object to autoprofiling (or challenge the outcome), and can do so by contacting us.

How long do we keep personal information for?

We will only keep your personal information for as long as reasonably necessary to fulfil the relevant purposes set out in this Privacy Notice and in order to comply with our legal and regulatory obligations.

If you would like further information regarding the periods for which your personal information will be stored, please contact us.

Your rights

Under data protection law you have certain rights in relation to the personal information that we hold about you. These include rights to know what information we hold about you and how it is used. You may exercise these rights at any time by contacting us using the details set out above.

There will not usually be a charge for handling a request to exercise your rights.

If we cannot comply with your request to exercise your rights we will usually tell you why.

There are some special rules about how these rights apply to health information as set out in legislation including the Data Protection Act (current and future), the General Data Protection Regulation as well as any secondary legislation which regulates the use of personal information.

If you make a large number of requests or it is clear that it is not reasonable for us to comply with a request then we do not have to respond. Alternatively, we can charge for responding.

Your rights include:

The right to access your personal information

You are usually entitled to a copy of the personal information we hold about you and details about how we use it.

Your information will usually be provided to you in writing, unless otherwise requested. If you have made the request electronically (e.g. by email) the information will be provided to you by electronic means where possible.

Please note that in some cases we may not be able to fully comply with your request, for example if your request involves the personal data of another person and it would not be fair to that person to provide it to you.

You are entitled to the following under data protection law.

Under Article 15(1) of the GDPR we must usually confirm whether we have personal information about you. If we do hold personal information about you we usually need to explain to you:

- i. The purposes for which we use your personal information
- ii. The types of personal information we hold about you
- iii. Who your personal information has been or will be shared with, including in particular organisations based outside the EEA.
- iv. If your personal information leaves the EU, how we make sure that it is protected
- v. Where possible, the length of time we expect to hold your personal information. If that is not possible, the criteria we use to determine how long we hold your information for
- vi. If the personal data we hold about you was not provided by you, details of the source of the information
- vii. Whether we make any decisions about you solely by computer and if so details of how those decision are made and the impact they may have on you
- viii. Your right to ask us to amend or delete your personal information
- ix. Your right to ask us to restrict how your personal information is used or to object to our use of your personal information
- x. Your right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office

We also need to provide you with a copy of your personal data

The right to rectification

We take reasonable steps to ensure that the information we hold about you is accurate and complete. However, if you do not believe this is the case, you can ask us to update or amend it.

The right to erasure (also known as the right to be forgotten)

We may update this Privacy Notice from time to time to ensure that it remains accurate, and the most up-to-date version can always be found on our website. In the event that there are any material changes to the manner in which your personal information is to be used then we will provide you with an updated copy of this Privacy Notice.

In some circumstances, you have the right to request that we delete the personal information we hold about you. However, there are exceptions to this right and in certain circumstances we can refuse to delete the information in question. In particular, for example, we do not have to comply with your request if it is necessary to keep your information in order to perform tasks which are in the public interest, including public health, or for the purposes of establishing, exercise or defending legal claims.

The right to restriction of processing

In some circumstances, we must "pause" our use of your personal data if you ask us to. We do not have to comply with all requests to restrict our use of your personal information. In particular, for example, we do not have to comply with your request if it is necessary to keep your information in order to perform tasks which are in the public interest, including public health, or for the purposes of establishing, exercise or defending legal claims.

The right to data portability

In some circumstances, we must transfer personal information that you have provided to us to you or (if this is technically feasible another individual/ organisation of your choice. The information must be transferred in an electronic format.

The right to object to marketing

You can ask us to stop sending you marketing messages at any time and we must comply with your request.

The right to withdraw consent

In some cases we need your consent in order for our use of your personal information to comply with data protection legislation.

We have explained in this notice where we rely on your consent in this way. Where we do this, you have the right to withdraw your consent to further use of your personal information.

The right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office

You can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office if you are unhappy with the way that we have dealt with a request from you to exercise any of these rights, or if you think we have not complied with our legal obligations.

More information can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website:
<https://ico.org.uk/>

Making a complaint will not affect any other legal rights or remedies that you have.

National Data Opt-Out Programme

NHS Digital is currently developing a national programme which will go live on 25 May 2018, pursuant to which all patients will be able to log their preferences as to sharing of their

personal information. All health and care organisations will be required to uphold patient choices, but only from March 2020. In the meantime you should make The Hearing Centre aware directly of any uses of your data to which you object.

Updates to this Privacy Notice

We may update this Privacy Notice from time to time to ensure that it remains accurate. In the event that these changes result in any material difference to the manner in which we process your personal data then we will provide you with an updated copy of the Policy.