



Confidentiality Policy

How we protect confidential patient information.

1. Our commitment

We respect every patient's right to privacy and confidentiality. Information is collected, accessed, used and shared only for legitimate purposes connected with care, practice administration, safety and legal or professional responsibilities.

2. Information covered

Confidential information includes anything that identifies or relates to a patient, whether spoken, written, photographed, recorded electronically or inferred. It includes contact details, medical and dental histories, clinical records, images, appointments, payments, correspondence and the fact that a person attends the practice.

3. Access and staff responsibilities

- Team members access only the information needed for their role.
- Confidentiality obligations continue after employment or engagement ends.
- Conversations take place discreetly and records are not left visible or unattended.
- Identity and authority are checked before information is disclosed.
- Work devices, passwords, email and messaging systems must be used securely.
- Suspected loss, misdirection or unauthorised access is reported immediately.

4. Sharing for care

Relevant information may be shared with dentists, doctors, hospitals, specialists, dental laboratories and other people involved in care when this is necessary and lawful. We share the minimum relevant information and explain disclosures wherever reasonably possible.

5. Parents, carers and representatives

We do not assume that a relative, friend or carer is entitled to information. We consider the patient's wishes, capacity, age, best interests and any documented authority. Children and young people are involved in decisions in a way appropriate to their understanding.

6. Disclosures without consent

Information may be disclosed without consent where required or permitted by law, including to protect a child or adult at risk, prevent or detect serious crime, respond to a court order, meet a statutory or regulatory duty, protect vital interests or establish or defend a legal claim. Decisions are made by an appropriately senior person, documented and limited to what is necessary.

7. Communications and records

We take reasonable care when using telephone, voicemail, post, email, text and online services. Contact preferences are respected where practicable, but no communication method can be guaranteed completely secure. Clinical information should not be sent through general website enquiries.

Paper and electronic records are protected by physical, technical and organisational safeguards, including access controls, audit trails, secure storage, backups, supplier controls and confidential disposal.

8. Information incidents

A suspected confidentiality or personal-data breach is contained, recorded and assessed promptly. We notify affected people and the Information Commissioner's Office where the law requires it, and we take action to reduce recurrence.

9. Requests and concerns

Patients can ask how their information is used, request access or correction, and raise a concern. Some rights have lawful limits because we must keep safe and accurate clinical records.

Privacy and policy contact
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Further information is available in our Privacy Policy at thetreatmentcentre.co.uk/privacy-policy.