

Privacy notice

Information about how the Collaboration and Leadership in Applied Health and Care (CLAHRC) Yorkshire and Humber research team, University of Sheffield processes Hospital Episode and Statistics data

Background

The Collaboration and Leadership in Applied Health and Care Yorkshire and Humber (CLAHRC YH) is a research programme funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), the research arm of the Department of Health. The CLAHRC YH research team within the University of Sheffield undertake applied health research with the aim of improving serviced and patient care. As part of this research programme the CLAHRC YH is undertaking a research project in the area of urgent and emergency care (UEC) entitled: Emergency and Urgent Care System Demand in Yorkshire and Humber: A retrospective analysis of routine data.

This research project involves the processing of Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data, which is NHS patient data and this privacy notice summarises how the study team within the University of Sheffield comply with the regulations as set out in the General Data Protection Regulation (EU 2016/679) and Data Protection Act 2018. The Information Commissioner's Office is the body that ensures that the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 is complied with by all those processing personal data.

Hospital Episode Statistics data

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data is information collected on every patient who attends hospital in England. This data is used as a basis for payment to hospitals for the care they provide. The data is stored centrally for the whole country by NHS digital and is made available for purposes of research to institutions such as universities. The CLAHRC YH research project applied successfully to undertake research with specific datasets held by NHS Digital.

About the HES data we are processing

Data for the CLAHRC YH study was collected on hospital admissions and accident and emergency attendances from 2011-2014 for the Yorkshire and Humber area only. This data is collected to answer specific research objectives of the project which were agreed in a protocol with our funders and with NHS Digital. These objectives are designed to provide information to improve the urgent and emergency care (UEC) system. Details about the study can be found at the following website link. *CLAHRC Website*

The data collected does not contain patients' names, addresses, phone numbers, NHS numbers, or records from primary care. The data contains only the characters before the space (e.g. N7, HP3 or CF99) for patient postcodes. It contains the month and year of patients' births, although not the date.

The data does not contain clinical notes, but instead summary information on times spent in A&E, discharge/admission information, diagnoses, operations and the class of care given.

Purpose of the data processing

The CLAHRC YH Project is using this data to answer the specific objectives of the study. The main aim of the study is to identify attendances and admissions to hospital that may be better managed elsewhere in the NHS. We can use key information from our analysis of the data about rates of

admission, length of stay and reason for admission to be calculated across all the attendances and admissions in our dataset. This information is then used to identify alternatives to inappropriate and costly hospital treatment. We use data from across Yorkshire and Humber to identify trends across the region in these key indicators of care such as avoidable admissions to hospital and also for differences between different NHS trusts, which help to identify potential best practice.

Legal basis for holding the data

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 sets out how personal data may be lawfully processed in the United Kingdom. Every organisation must have a legal basis for processing (collecting, storing and analysing) such data. The lawful basis for processing the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data for this study is defined in Article 6 (1) (e) of GDPR **as a public task basis**. Essentially this means that our purpose of our data processing is for a task in the public interest. The data we are processing (health data) is classed as sensitive data and additional legal basis is provided by Article 9 (2) of the GDPR whereby our processing is necessary in the area of public health and specifically to maintain high standards of quality and safety in health care.

How we protect the data

Although individuals cannot be identified using the data we have collected for this study we have the strictest possible procedures to protect it. The data is shared by NHS Digital on a strict contractual basis which stipulates that the data is stored on a security protected networked drive within the University, which is only accessible by a small number of researchers who need to view the data. The data agreement with NHS Digital also states the amount of time the project team can store and process data, which is limited to the life of the project. We do not disclose any individual data and under no circumstances is the data shared with any third party.

How long we will store the data for (Retention period)

Data will be retained under the terms of our data agreement with NHS Digital. Data will be held until the end of the project which is end of September 2019. At that point any data will be destroyed in line with the policies of the University of Sheffield.

Your individual rights with respect to processing of the data

Individuals have specific rights with regard to how their data is processed depending on the nature of the data and the purpose for which it is being used. The data we hold has been de-identified so we cannot identify individuals within our data. However, as an individual you have a right to be informed of the purposes for processing data, how long we will hold the data for (termed: retention periods for that personal data), and who it will be shared with (termed 'privacy information'). As stated above the data we hold is solely for research purposes and when the project is completed then individuals have a right for their data to be erased. If you are concerned about how any of your personal data may be being processed, then in the first instance you may contact our Data Protection Officer (contact details below) who can advise you on the course of action to take. The University of Sheffield has information on individual rights and privacy at the following link <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

Lodging a complaint

In the UK the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) is the independent authority which up holds the publics rights with regard to information and privacy. You can contact the ICO at anytime at dpo@ico.org.uk. If you have any concerns regarding the processing of the data for this project then please contact the Project Lead Colin O’Keeffe contact details below in the first instance.

Further information

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