

National Data Opt-Out Policy

1. Policy Statement

This policy sets out how **Prestige Medical Group** complies with the **National Data Opt-Out** requirements, in line with legislation and guidance from NHS Digital. From 31 July 2022, it is a legal requirement for all health and social care organisations registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to be compliant with the National Data Opt-Out.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- Patients and service users are aware of their right to opt out of their confidential patient information being used for purposes beyond their individual care (i.e., for research and planning).
- That the organisation applies the opt-out correctly when using or disclosing confidential patient information for secondary purposes.
- Compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018, GDPR, and the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, contractors, volunteers, and students at **Prestige Medical Group**.
- All services that involve the processing of confidential patient information for non-direct care purposes.

4. Definitions

- **Confidential Patient Information:** Information that identifies a patient and includes details about their health or care.
- **Direct Care:** Care and treatment provided to an individual patient.
- **Secondary Use:** Use of data for planning, research, commissioning, etc., not directly related to the individual's care.
- **National Data Opt-Out:** A service that allows patients to opt out of their confidential information being used for secondary purposes.

5. Responsibilities

- **Data Protection Officer (DPO):** Ensures policy implementation and acts as the point of contact.
- **Caldicott Guardian:** Oversees the appropriate use of confidential patient information.
- **Information Governance Lead:** Supports data compliance and staff training.
- **All Staff:** Must understand and follow this policy when handling patient data.

6. How the Opt-Out is Applied

Before using or disclosing any confidential patient information for planning or research:

- We check whether the **National Data Opt-Out** applies.
- We apply the opt-out to datasets before disclosure or use unless there is a legal requirement or exemption.

7. Patient Communication

We inform patients of their rights through:

- Posters and leaflets in reception and public areas.
- Our website and patient portals.
- Verbal communication from staff when appropriate.

Patients can manage their opt-out choice by informing reception or at:

www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters

8. Training and Awareness

All staff receive annual training on data protection, confidentiality, and how the National Data Opt-Out applies to their roles.

9. Monitoring and Compliance

- Annual audits are conducted to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Breaches or failure to apply opt-outs correctly are reported via our incident management procedures.

10. Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there is a significant change in legislation or NHS guidance.