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Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and your information

The ICO recognises the unprecedented challenges the NHS and other health professionals are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ICO also recognise that 'Public bodies may require additional collection and sharing of personal data to protect against serious threats to public health.'

The Government have also taken action in respect of this and on 20th March 2020 the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care issued a notice under Regulation 3(4) of the Health Service (Control of Patient Information) Regulations 2002 requiring organisations such as GP Practices to use your information to help GP Practices and other healthcare organisations to respond to and deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please note that this notice has now been revised and extended by a further notice from 29th July 2020 until 31st March 2021.

In order to look after your healthcare needs during this difficult time, we may urgently need to share your personal information, including medical records, with clinical and non clinical staff who belong to organisations that are permitted to use your information and need to use it to help deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. This could (amongst other measures) consist of either treating you or a member of your family and enable us and other healthcare organisations to monitor the disease, assess risk and manage the spread of the disease. Additionally, the use of your information is now required to support NHS Test and Trace.

*Please be assured that we will only share information and health data that is **necessary** to meet yours and public healthcare needs.*

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has also stated that these measures are temporary and will expire on 31st March 2021 unless a further extension is required. Any further extension will be provided in writing and we will communicate the same to you.

Please also note that the data protection and electronic communication laws do not stop us from sending public health messages to you, either by phone, text or email as these messages are not direct marketing.

It may also be necessary, where the latest technology allows us to do so, to use your information and health data to facilitate digital consultations and diagnoses and we will always do this with your security in mind.

If you are concerned about how your information is being used, please contact our DPO using the contact details provided in this Privacy Notice.