



Confidentiality

Confidentiality: Information for carers

Sharing information with carers

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, through its professional staff, seeks to work positively and inclusively with families and carers as a daily part of healthcare practice.

Whilst families and carers do not have any automatic right to receive information about the person they care for, Oxford Health NHS FT staff will work to actively inform, include and empower carers as a key principle of their practice.

Patient consent

One of the key assessments staff have to make before sharing personal information with families and carers is about whether patients have capacity to give their consent. This assessment involves staff making a judgement about whether to share information.

Staff will be able to inform families and carers, from their assessment, if patients have capacity to consent in respect of what information can or cannot be shared with families and carers.

Where patients do not consent

The rules of confidentiality should not be used by staff as a means of excluding family members and carers. There is a lot of very important information which staff can provide to help families and carers understand the needs of their cared for person and their own needs as a carer. This type of information can be provided without releasing information about the patient and breaching confidence.

Here are some of the more important topics staff are able to discuss with carers:

- The types of mental health conditions we work with and the type of treatments available. An explanation of the mental health problem (i.e. diagnosis) affecting the person being cared for can only be shared if the carer knows this already or consent has been given.
- An explanation of the use of the Mental Health Act, for example the role of the nearest relative, rights of appeal and rights of discharge.
- When medication should be taken.
- An explanation of treatments, medication and possible side-effects, plus other treatments that may be available.
- Signs to spot when medication is not being taken by the person being cared for and what to do next.
- Signs of relapse.
- Who to contact in an emergency and be given a 24-hour phone number.
- Advice on how to care for the patient.
- A regular opportunity for carers and clinicians to enter into meaningful dialogue about the service user – this can provide the care team with vital information about the patient.
- Details of local or national support networks.
- Advice about what support will be provided when the carer is no longer able to provide the care.
- Discussion of risks to the service user and to the carer, and advice on how to minimise these risks.

- The carers right to an assessment and services available to support carers with their own needs.
- Hospital discharge plan discussed and agreed with carer.

What if I do not feel I am being listened to or engaged by staff

You should take this up with the team manager in the local team.

If this does not resolve the issue you should contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).

All staff will be able to give you information about their role and how to contact a PALS officer.

Information is also available on the trust webpage:

www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

How to contact PALS

Patient Advice and Liaison Service
Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
The Whiteleaf Centre
Bierton Road
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP20 1EG

Freephone: 0800 328 7971

Service available Monday - Friday from 9.30am - 4.30pm
(24 hour answerphone)

Email: pals@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Confidentiality - the common law

Common law is not a single bill or Act of Parliament but is built up from a number of individual cases where individual judgements have been made.

The underlying principle is that information that has been confided must not be used or disclosed, except as originally understood by the confider or with their permission.

Notes:

If you would like to have information translated into a different language, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team at: EqualityandInclusion@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Arabic يُرجى الاتصال بنا إذا كنتم ترغبون في الحصول على المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بتسليق مختلف.

আপনি এই তথ্য অন্য ভাষায় বা আলাদা আকারে **Bengali** পেতে চাইলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।
Urdu اگر آپ یہ معلومات دیگر زبان یا مختلف فارمیٹ میں چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

Chinese 若要以其他語言或格式提供這些資訊，請與我們聯繫

Polish Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, skontaktuj się z nami.

Portuguese Queira contactar-nos se pretender as informações noutra idioma ou num formato diferente.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Trust Headquarters
Littlemore Mental Health Centre
Sandford Road
Littlemore,
Oxford
OX4 4XN

Switchboard 01865 901 000
Email enquiries@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk
Website www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Become a member of our Foundation Trust
www.ohftnhs.uk/membership