



## **Data protection code of practice for patients**

### **Keeping your records**

- 1 This practice complies with the Data Protection Act 1998 and this policy describes our procedures for ensuring that personal information about patients is processed fairly and lawfully.

### **The personal data that we hold**

- 2 To provide you with a high standard of dental care and attention, we need to hold personal information about you. This personal data includes:
  - 2.1 Your past and current medical and dental condition; personal details such as your age, National Insurance number/NHS number, address, telephone number and your general medical practitioner
  - 2.2 Radiographs, clinical photographs and study models
  - 2.3 Information about the treatment that we have provided or propose to provide and its cost
  - 2.4 Notes of conversations/incidents about your care, for which a record needs to be kept
  - 2.5 Records of consent to treatment
  - 2.6 Correspondence with other health care professionals relating to you, for example in the hospital or community services.

### **Reasons for holding this information**

- 3 We need to keep comprehensive and accurate personal data about our patients to provide them with safe and appropriate dental care

### **How we process the data**

We will process personal data that we hold about you in the following way:

### **Retaining information**

- 4 We will retain your dental records while you are a practice patient and after you cease to be a patient, for at least eleven years or, for children, until the age of 25, whichever is the longer.

### **Security of information**

- 5 Personal data about you is held in the practice's computer system and/or in a manual filing system. The information is not accessible to the public; only authorised members of staff have access to it. Our computer system has secure audit trails and we back-up information routinely.

## **Disclosure of information**

- 6 To provide proper and safe dental care, we may need to disclose personal information about you to:
  - 6.1 Your general medical practitioner
  - 6.2 The hospital or community dental services
  - 6.3 Other health professionals caring for you
  - 6.4 NHS payment authorities
  - 6.5 HM Revenue and Customs
  - 6.6 The Department for Work and Pensions and its agencies, where you are claiming exemption or remission from NHS charges
  - 6.7 Private dental schemes of which you are a member.
  
- 8 Disclosure will take place on a 'need-to-know' basis. Only those individuals or organisations who need to know in order to provide care to you – or in order to ensure the proper administration of Government (whose personnel are covered by strict confidentiality rules) - will be given the information. Only the information that the recipient needs to know will be disclosed.
  
- 9 In very limited circumstances or when required by law or a court order, personal data may be disclosed to a third party not connected with your healthcare. In all other situations, disclosure that is not covered by this Code of Practice will only occur when we have your specific consent.
  
- 10 Where possible, you will be informed of these requests for disclosure.

## **Access**

- 11 You have the right of access to the data that we hold about you and to receive a copy. Access may be obtained by making a request in writing and the payment of a fee of up to £10 (for records held on computer) or £50 (for those held manually, including non-digital radiographs). We will provide a copy of the record within 40 days of receipt of the request and fee (where payable) and an explanation of your record should you require it.