

Access to Care Services

Use of your NHS number in Adult Social Care

If you are receiving support from Havering Council then the NHS may share your NHS number with Social Care. This is so that the NHS and Havering Social Care are using the same number to identify you whilst providing your care. By using the same number the NHS and Social Care can work together more closely to improve your care and support.

Your NHS number is accessed through an NHS service called the Personal Demographic Service (PDS). Health and Social Care send basic information such as your name, address and date of birth to the PDS so they can find your NHS number. Once retrieved from the PDS the NHS number is stored on Havering Council's Adult Social Care system.

The NHS number is also used on a limited set of printed material that is used by health and social care colleagues in the provision of direct care.

The recorded information provides those clinical, health and social care professionals directly involved in your care with access to the most up-to-date information when they have contact with you. The shared information is linked together using your NHS number. Access to recorded information is strictly controlled based on the role of the professional. For example, social workers will only have access to information that is relevant to the carrying out their social care duties.

Recorded information may contain social care information such as:

- **Carers:** Name - Address - Phone number (locally held) - Relationship
- **Allocated workers:** Name - Phone number - Team - Role - Start Date
- **Referral:** Contact Source - Contact Sub Source - Contact Date - Contact Outcome
- **Support plan:** Service Type - Service provider - Service Start Date
- **Care Plan:** Reablement Plan Start Date - Reablement Plan End Date
- **Disabilities:** Disability - Onset Date
- **Occupational Therapy:** OT Assessment Start Date - OT Assessment End Date - OT Assessment Outcome

The use of joined up information across health and social care brings many benefits. One specific example where this will be the case is the discharge of patients into social care. Delays in discharge from hospital can occur because details of social care involvement are not readily available to the staff on the ward. The hospital simply does not know whom to contact to discuss the ongoing care of a patient. The linking of social care and health information via the NHS number will help hospital staff quickly identify if social care support is already in place and details of the most appropriate contact. Ongoing care can be planned earlier in the process because hospital staff will know whom to talk to.

This type of coordinated support brings many benefits including:

- Fewer unnecessary clinical tests
- More accurate prescriptions
- Better self-management for patients
- Better co-ordinated and safer care
- More time to spend on clinical care
- Less paperwork
- More efficient use of healthcare services

The addition of adult social care data, enabled via the storage of the NHS number, will bring additional benefits:

- Better co-ordinated and safer care across health and social care enabled through the sharing of real-time information.
- Better coordination of discharges from hospital into social care, as explained above
- More time to spend on planning and co-ordinating social care because health staff can identify and involve social care staff earlier in the process.
- Earlier intervention to maximise the opportunities or reablement services leading to greater independence for patients
- Less paperwork and more efficient use of social care resources

The NHS number will also be printed on a subset of social care printed documentation that is specifically used to communicate between health and social care organisations.. This brings the benefit of better co-ordinated and safe care across health and social care through the use of the unique identifier rather than a reliance on name and date of birth to identify a person.

These printed forms may relate to matters such as:

- Referral
- Assessment
- Support and care planning
- Reablement and rehabilitation
- Medical consent
- GP consent
- Transitional beds
- Deprivation of liberty
- Case review

You have the right to object to the processing of your NHS Number. This will not stop you from receiving care, but may limit how we are able to support you. To help you decide, we will discuss with you how this may affect our ability to provide you with care, and any other options you have.

If you object to the use of your NHS Number or would like to discuss how it is used please contact Customer Services (Adultsocialcare@haverling.gov.uk) or talk to your social worker.

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