



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

# Privacy Notice NHS Health Check data extraction

Published [21 March 2024]

## **Summary of Initiative/Policy**

The NHS Health Check is a risk assessment, awareness, and management programme for adults in England aged 40-74. It is designed to reduce a person's chance of developing preventable non-communicable diseases such as kidney disease, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, lung disease and some forms of dementia. It does this by assessing the top seven risk factors driving the burden of non-communicable disease in England and supporting people to reduce their risk through behaviour changes and/or clinical management.

NHS Health Checks are carried out by health professionals – often a nurse or healthcare assistant. A range of data items are collected, including demographic and health items such as date of birth, NHS number, blood pressure and risk of cardiovascular disease. Data collected during a check must be recorded on the patient's general practice information system.

## **Data Controller**

Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) is the data controller and has previously directed NHS Digital (now NHS England) to establish a system for the collection and analysis of NHS Health Check data

## **What personal data we collect**

The following data was collected in 2018.

NHS Digital collected the following information for each patient:

- NHS number (this information was not passed on to OHID)
- date of birth (this information was not passed on to OHID, though age at time of the extract was)
- postcode (this information was not passed on to OHID)
- gender
- patient active status
- general practice code
- date patient registered with the general practice
- date of death (if applicable) (this information was not passed on to OHID)
- ethnicity
- first language (and whether an interpreter was needed)
- country of birth
- carer status
- diagnoses for disabilities: such as learning disability, serious mental illness, blindness, severe deafness

NHS Digital extracted information that related to the health conditions that the NHS Health Check programme seeks to prevent or diagnose:

- smoking status
- family history of coronary heart disease
- body mass index (BMI) score
- cholesterol level
- blood pressure
- physical activity levels
- risk of cardiovascular disease
- alcohol use
- tests for cardiovascular disease risk factors
- cardiovascular disease diagnoses
- information on the advice or other information provided to the patient such as advice around diet
- information on any medication prescribed for cardiovascular disease

## **How we use your data (purposes)**

The data was collected to provide information on how the NHS Health Check programme is performing:

- to show how the NHS Health Check programme is performing in different areas of England.
- to highlight opportunities for improvement in how we deliver the NHS Health Check programme.
- in the future, DHSC aims to use this data to track how the NHS Health Check programme has made a difference to the long-term health of patients.

Examples of how the NHS Health Check GP data has been used to evaluate the programme include:

- An interactive dashboard describing the profile of NHS Health Check attendees and non-attendees by year and by local area (CCG and Local Authority

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-tools-and-services/data-services/general-practice-data-hub/nhs-health-check-programme>

- A peer-reviewed papers published in 2020: “An evaluation of the uptake and delivery of the NHS Health Check Programme, using national primary care data from 9.5 million people”.

<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/bmjopen-2020-042963>

- Findings from the data have been used extensively to inform the NHS Health Check 2021 review and therefore are shaping future policy on the programme.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-health-check-programme-review>

## **Legal basis for processing personal data**

In 2018 the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care directed NHS Digital (now NHS England, to collect from General Practices in England demographic, medical and administrative information on persons offered an NHS Health Check. The Direction also made provision for linkage by NHS England of the primary care information to other information such as hospital activity and civil registrations information.

The data was collected in 2018 via NHS England General Practice Extraction Service (GPES) and, further to PHE successfully applying for a 5 years Data Sharing Agreement (DSA), NHS England provided a pseudonymised version of the NHS Health Check GP dataset to Public Health England (PHE).

Ownership of the NHS Health Check GP dataset transferred to DHSC upon dissolution of Public Health England (PHE).

In 2023 DHSC renewed the Data Sharing Agreement to retain the data for a further 3 years.

The lawful basis for processing personal data under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is:

Article 6(1)(e) - processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller; This is in line with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care's duties in relation to the promotion and provision of the health service in England (including public health functions) as outlined in Part 1 of the NHS Act 2006.

The lawful basis for processing special category data under the UK GDPR is: Article 9(2)(h) 'processing is necessary for the purposes of preventive or occupational medicine, for the assessment of the working capacity of the employee, medical diagnosis, the provision of health or social care or treatment or the management of health or social care systems and services' and;

Article 9(2)(i) 'processing is necessary for reasons of public interest in the area of public health, such as protecting against serious cross-border threats to health or ensuring high

standards of quality and safety of health care and of medicinal products or medical devices’.

## **Data Processors and other recipients of personal data**

The data is not transferred to any third parties.

## **International data transfers and storage location(s)**

The data is stored in the UK

The data is not transferred to any third parties.

## **Retention and disposal policy**

The data was collected in 2018 via NHS England General Practice Extraction Service (GPES) and, further to PHE successfully applying for a 5 year Data Sharing Agreement (DSA), NHS England provided a pseudonymised version of the NHS Health Check GP dataset to Public Health England (PHE).

Ownership of the NHS Health Check GP dataset transferred to DHSC upon dissolution of PHE.

In 2023 DHSC renewed the Data Sharing Agreement to retain the data for a further 3 years.

## **How we keep your data secure**

Data is stored by DHSC either within a dedicated SQL Server 2017 database hosted on DHSC/ internal servers, or a dedicated network share; both of which are DHSC/ approved to store person level data.

No backups, data or file shares are saved on public cloud servers. All processes are tightly controlled and governed by DHSC backup policy.

## **Your rights as a data subject**

By law, data subjects have a number of rights and this processing does not take away or reduce these rights under the EU General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 applies.

These rights are:

1. The right to get copies of information – individuals have the right to ask for a copy of any information about them that is used.
2. The right to get information corrected – individuals have the right to ask for any information held about them that they think is inaccurate, to be corrected
3. The right to limit how the information is used – individuals have the right to ask for any of the information held about them to be restricted, for example, if they think inaccurate information is being used.
4. The right to object to the information being used – individuals can ask for any information held about them to not be used. However, this is not an absolute right, and continued use of the information may be necessary, with individuals being advised if this is the case.
5. The right to get information deleted – this is not an absolute right, and continued use of the information may be necessary, with individuals being advised if this is the case.

### **Comments or complaints**

Anyone unhappy or wishing to complain about how personal data is used as part of this programme, should contact [data\\_protection@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:data_protection@dhsc.gov.uk) in the first instance or write to:

Data Protection Officer  
1st Floor North  
39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU

Anyone who is still not satisfied can complain to the Information Commissioners Office. Their website address is [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) and their postal address is:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

### **Automated decision making or profiling**

No decision will be made about individuals solely based on automated decision making (where a decision is taken about them using an electronic system without human involvement) which has a significant impact on them.

### **Changes to this policy**

This privacy notice is kept under regular review, and new versions will be available on our privacy notice page on our website. This privacy notice was last updated on 20/03/2024

© Crown copyright 2022

Information Risk Management & Assurance/Office of the Data Protection Officer  
[www.gov.uk/dhsc](http://www.gov.uk/dhsc)

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

