

Process note on the GPES Data for Consented Research Direction for patients and NHS

[This is purely process commentary, not initially patient facing – the primary audience is GPs / DHSC]

The Secretary of State has [Directed NHS England](#) to change what they do with GP data and does not care whether GPs [lie to patients](#) about it. Like the new GP contract, this is being imposed.

For the first time since NHS England came into existence, promises made yesterday about your medical notes are being broken today for the laziness of tomorrow, and for the gain of lobbying interests.

The current Government has decided that patients' medical records that have been copied since 2020 with the explicit promise that they would be used **only** for pandemic purposes can now be used in any way that politicians decide. This was imposed on your GP and the NHS by politicians, following the ethos of Mr Peter Mandelson – whose political protégé is currently serving as Secretary of State for Health.

They are taking **all** patient data (unless you have opted out), irrespective of whether you are in Biobank etc. Every patient record is being taken (unless you have opted out).

This affects not only those with concerns about the misuse of pandemic-era powers and data – the change makes it impossible for **any** promise like the one given in 2020 to be trusted next time. This will affect everyone in England (again) when Mr Streeting imposes his “Single Patient Record”, for which he wishes to be data controller. Any promises he makes to you now have precedent to be ignored by his successor, set by *his* own precedent.

GPs have been told “no action” is required, but this is untrue; they are *lawfully required* to update their website. medConfidential suggests they do the following:

1) Add this text to the top of the pandemic GP data collection page/section, and publish a news item linking to the update:

March 2026 update:

The Department of Health is insisting your GP must share your full coded confidential medical record.

This breaks the promises Government made when data was collected for what it said at the time, was Covid pandemic purposes only.

The GP data of every patient (without a GP Data Opt Out) can now be reused in whatever way Wes wishes.

GPs objections to this have been ignored and we have been given no choice.

There is a legal Direction from the Department of Health to NHS England, and a “Data Provision Notice” for GP Practices. While that Notice says GPs need “take no action”, we are required by law to display a notice that explains the changes in the uses of your data.

Patients with concerns who wish to take action can request a “GP Data Opt Out” by requesting this face to face at reception, requesting this via telephone to reception, or by sending us an online admin message. If you want to include your close family dependents, you will need to include their NHS numbers and names in the request message.

2) We also suggest that GP practices in England send this message (or a shorter version) to their patients who are over the age of 13 *who don't already have a GPDOO*:

Dear Patient,

Our GP practice, like every other one in England, shared some of our patient data during the 2020 pandemic to be used only for the pandemic response, and within very careful rules which we as GPs would oversee.

We have now been notified by Government that Wes Streeting has decided to break the pandemic promises and share your data for any purpose the Government chooses.

GPs in England have been given no choice in what the Government does now, or in the future, with the GP medical data they have already copied.

If you have concerns about this, the only action available is for you to express your right to a “GP Data Opt Out” which prevents your GP record being used for purposes beyond your care outside your GP practice.

You can request this by asking at reception or over the phone, or sending us an online admin message asking us to set up a “type-1 GP Data opt out” for you. If you also want this for your close family dependents, you need to include their NHS numbers and names in the admin message and we'll set it up for them too.

(outside of our usual remit, but relevant to everyone reading:

3) Practices will have received a “Jess’s Rule” poster. You may wish to add a sticker to the poster that adds:

From April 2026, NHS England has imposed a new contract on each GP which prohibits your GP from referring patients for necessary treatment unless the Hospital agrees (ie their waiting list is short enough) – the “Rule” this poster advertises will be overridden by the Government’s effort to limit those referrals.

This change was imposed on our practice without consultation, and if it causes you the same concern it causes us, we can only suggest you contact your local MP. The GPs treating you will, of course, continue to do everything each GP can for every patient – from April 2026 we are allowed to do less.