

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Who is responsible for Connecting Care?

A wide range of health and social care organisations in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire are part of Connecting Care. Further information can be found on our “Which organisations can view my information?” document.

Is this a local or a national project?

You may have heard of other, similar projects in other areas. However, the Connecting Care programme and the digital record system that supports it, is unique to Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. There are other local shared records in different regions.

Why do you want to share my health records?

We can improve the quality of care for everyone in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire thanks to shared records access - better and safer care can be delivered if care professionals have the right information at the right time.

Doesn't everyone involved in my health and social care already have access to my information?

Each organisation will keep its own record about you. For example, everyone who is registered at a GP practice will have a record kept at that practice. If you attend Southmead Hospital, they will create their own record about you, and the same for social care services.

Many of these records are now held digitally, which means that we can now start to bring all the information together in one place for a fuller picture.

How will you prevent the information being used inappropriately?

Health and social care organisations that hold data about you must comply with data protection law. All staff members within these organisations receive training on their responsibilities under the law.

Your record is kept on a secure database and is never shared with anyone who is not an authorised member of staff. Every time anyone accesses your record, a log is kept of who they are and what they did. These logs are audited by the appropriate senior member of staff within the organisation that employs them and any unexplained activity is investigated further and appropriate action taken. Use of your information is governed by existing rules and regulations to protect patient confidentiality. The NHS and local authorities take data management and security of personal information very seriously.

Information in Connecting Care, like all sensitive, personal, confidential data, will never be made public, used for advertising, or sold. Professionals accessing your information are subject to the existing codes of conduct for NHS and local authority staff, this means they must respect your privacy and keep all information about you safe.

Can I access my information?

Yes. You have the right in law to ask for a copy of any information organisations hold about you. This includes copies of paper, digital and hybrid patient health records.

If you wish to access information held about you on your health and care records, please contact the organisation(s) providing your care. The information displayed in Connecting Care is only a partial record of what is held about you by the Connecting Care partner organisations. If you would like to request a copy of your information held in Connecting Care, you need to contact BNSSG ICB Customer Services – their contact information can be found [here](#).

How do I opt out of/opt back into Connecting Care?

You are able to opt out from Connecting Care and prevent your data being viewed on the Connecting Care digital record, though please be aware that we do not recommend this. To find more information on opting in and out, please see our document, “What if I don’t want my information shared?”