

## Deciding to Opt Out of Connecting your Care

### What is Connecting your Care

Connecting your Care will provide a secure system that makes existing information in electronic care records across a number of different health and care services in south west London visible to the team looking after you anywhere that you receive care.

Connecting your Care does not collect new information and does not replace any of the existing care record systems, it just shares important information between them in a virtual/read-only view.

### What is the purpose of Connecting your Care?

Your health and care records usually move around between services by letter, email, or phone (and only in a few instances electronically). At times this can delay information sharing, which can affect decision making and slow down your treatment.

By agreeing to share your information via Connecting your Care health and care professionals involved in caring for you will have faster access to important information, on a need-to-know basis. This will help them provide you with the most timely and efficient care, especially when care is unplanned or in an emergency.

### How will sharing this information benefit me?

Sharing information between the different teams who look after you will improve the safety and quality of your care and the speed with which you can be assessed. For example: if you attend A&E or an NHS walk in centre, the doctors are able to quickly see any previously diagnosed conditions and any medications that you take regularly.

This means that you will not have to repeatedly answer the same questions about your medical history and the tablets you take each time you go to a new service. It might also mean that you don't have to have tests repeated, such as blood tests and x-rays as the doctors will be able to see your latest results even if the test was taken somewhere else.

## What does it mean if I opt out?

The information shared via Connecting your Care could not only save time for you and the professionals caring for you, but it could also one day be lifesaving. The more the people looking after you know about your history, the better able they are to make the right decisions about your care.

If you choose to opt out, the staff treating you may not be able to view the information held about you in other systems and may not be aware of important information that is needed to treat you safely and effectively. Finding this information “the old-fashioned way” – by telephoning, emailing and sending by paper is less secure, slower and may cause delay in assessing and treating you.

However, the choice to opt out is yours. The opt out process is quite simple. And you should know that should you change your mind in the future, it is easy to opt back in again if you want to.

## How do I opt out?

If you do not want to share your health and care records between services, please complete the **Opt Out Request Form** and return it as per the instructions on the form.

You can download the form, and the accompany Frequently Asked Questions from our website [www.swlondon.nhs.uk/connectingyourcare](http://www.swlondon.nhs.uk/connectingyourcare) and you can also pick up a form from your GP practice and the Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) office in your local hospital.

You will receive a letter confirming that your request to opt-out of Connecting your Care has been completed within 28 days.

If you would like more information before opting out you can also call us on 020 3668 3100 and email us on [connectingyourcare@swlondon.nhs.uk](mailto:connectingyourcare@swlondon.nhs.uk)