

Privacy notice for service users of Healthwatch North Tyneside

This privacy notice tells you what we do with your personal information, called 'personal data' how we make sure that what we do is lawful, how long we keep it and your rights as an individual.

Wherever possible Healthwatch North Tyneside (HWNT) will only collect, use and store information about you that you have willingly provided. We aim to be open about collecting information and clear about what we will use it for.

For each of our project, engagement and research activities, we will tell you how the information you share with us will be used and stored. We are committed to anonymising the information shared with us at an early stage in the project, meaning that any name or contact details you share with us is separate to the information shared with us. This means we cannot tell which person told us which information.

About us

We retain and use personal data (information that relates to and identifies living people) to help us carry out our role as the local independent champion for people who use health and social care services.

We will always make sure that your information is protected and treated securely.

Any information that you give will be held in accordance with the:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Data controller

HWNT is the data controller where we are responsible for deciding what is done with your personal information.

When we are contracted to do work for another organisation

When HWNT acts under instruction from another organisation we are what is called the data processor and the other organisation the data controller. There will be a contract in place which will tell us what to do with your information.

If any of your personal data is being used for a purpose that is not controlled by us, you will be given a different privacy notice by the data controller which will tell you all about it.

Your rights are unlikely to be affected if your information is used in this way.

Data Protection Officer

The person responsible for compliance with data protection is called the Data Protection Officer. In HWNT this is Catherine Hunt.

Why we collect information about you

If anyone can be identified by any information that we collect, this information is called 'personal data'. Data protection law says that HWNT must have a reason or 'purpose' for collecting and using personal data. Our purposes are to:

- Deliver our services
- Manage our relationship with you
- Develop new ways to meet our clients' needs
- To improve the way we deliver our services
- Keep internal records
- Keep you informed about our activities
- To improve the quality and safety of care.

Personal data we may collect about you:

- Your name and contact details
- IP address when you visit our website
- Information about your needs and your experience of health and social care services

- We may be given information about you from referring organisations or medical practitioners to help us to provide our services for you. We will tell you what we have received and who gave it to us if it happens
- feedback from surveys and online forms
- Any comments you may post about us on social media sites

See our Cookie Policy at <https://healthwatchnorthtyneside.co.uk/cookie-policy/>.

How we ensure that what we do with your personal information is lawful

HWNT cannot use your personal data for any reason unless we have a lawful basis to do so. Those that we use are:

Deliver our services

- The data subject has given consent to the processing
- The processing is necessary to undertake a public task
- The processing is necessary for compliance with any legal obligations to which the data controller is subject, other than an obligation imposed by contract
- The processing is necessary in order to protect the vital interests of the data subject

Manage our relationship with you

- We have a legitimate interest in using your information. This information allows us to process queries effectively.

Develop new ways to meet our clients' needs

- We have a legitimate interest in using your information. For example, we may develop new methods of service delivery.

To improve the way we deliver our services

- We have a legitimate interest in using your information. We may use feedback given to us.

Keep internal records

- The processing is necessary for compliance with any legal obligations to which the data controller is subject, other than an obligation imposed by contract

Keep you informed about our activities

- The data subject has given consent to the processing
- We have a legitimate interest in using your information. If we already have a relationship with you we may not ask for your consent to send you a newsletter or informative email – we may just send it

To improve the quality and safety of care

- The processing is necessary to undertake a public task

Special Category Personal Data

This includes information about race, ethnic origin, religion, health, sex life and sexual orientation.

These types of personal data require additional protection. This is because use of this data could create significant risks to the individual's fundamental rights and freedoms.

The presumption is that this type of data needs to be treated with greater care because collecting and using it is more likely to interfere with these fundamental rights or open someone up to discrimination.

Where we process special category data we do so because:

- the data subject has given explicit consent to the processing of the personal data for one or more specified purposes.
- processing is necessary to protect the vital interests of the data subject or another natural person where the data subject is physically or legally incapable of giving consent
- processing is necessary for the purpose of preventative or occupational medicine... for the management of health or social care systems and services...

If you give consent, you have the right to withdraw this at any time by contacting us in writing using the address or contact details given in this privacy notice.

If you disagree with us using your personal data for one or more of our legitimate interests let us know in writing and we will consider whether we will stop using it for that purpose.

How long do we keep your information?

We keep contact details for clients with whom we have/have had a working relationship, and for organisations or individuals who contact us, for a maximum of 10 years after the last contact.

For more details see our retention schedule.

Sharing Your Personal Information

HWNT does not share your personal information with any third parties, other than those listed below.

When we share your personal data with these third parties who perform services for us, we require them to take appropriate steps to protect your personal information, and only to use the personal information for the purpose of performing those specific services.

We currently use:

Name of company/organisation	The service they perform for us, or their function
Social Plus Ltd	Website hosting
SOS Group	Telephone (land line), Microsoft Office 365
Unite Group	IT support and maintenance
*Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, Twitter / X, LinkedIn	Social media
*Mailchimp, EmailOctopus	e-News
*Smart Survey, Survey Monkey	Survey hosting

***Please be aware that these organisations are data controllers in their own right and we encourage you to read their privacy notices.**

We will never sell or distribute your personal information to any other third parties or make it public unless we have a legal obligation to do so.

If we provide links to websites of other organisations, this privacy notice does not cover how that organisation processes personal information. We encourage you to read the privacy notices on the other websites you visit.

For some of our project activities, we may ask you for your consent to share your personal information with a project partner. When we ask your consent we will tell you how your personal information will be used. We will only share your personal information if you give your consent to do so, and recommend that you check the privacy statement of the project partners involved.

Sharing your data with Healthwatch England

We are required to share some information with Healthwatch England to ensure that your views are considered at a national level. This enables them to analyse service provision across the country and supply the Department of Health and national commissioners with the information you provide.

Find out more about Healthwatch England's purpose and what they do by visiting <https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/what-we-do>.

The information we provide to Healthwatch England contains no personally identifiable data. Any information that is used for national publications is anonymised and will only be used with the consent of a local Healthwatch.

Safety of personal data

In order to prevent unauthorised access or disclosure we have effective physical, electronic and managerial procedures to safeguard and secure the information we hold about you

We keep information about you safe and secure by using electronic databases which are password protected systems, accessed only by staff who have been sufficiently trained and who are bound by our organisational policies and procedures.

All special category data collected is segregated from personal details to ensure anonymity.

Any paper copies are kept securely in locked drawers/cupboards.

If you have provided information on paper, it may be transferred to an electronic database.

All information you provide to us is stored on secure servers.

Transferring personal data outside the European Economic Area

Some of your personal data may be transferred outside the EEA.

We make sure that it is protected in the same way as if it was being used in the EEA.

To do this we will:

- Only transfer it to a non-EEA country with privacy laws that give the same protection as the EEA as specified by the European Commission and which has been determined as adequate by the EEA or the UK;
- When transferring to the USA or any other country that has not been assessed as adequate we will ensure that there is a safeguard in place that is recognised by the representative supervisory authority of the United Kingdom. This is the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The safeguard is to use one of the ICO's standard contractual clauses.

You can find out more about these safeguards on the ICO website.

Your Rights

Under data protection law, you have rights we need to make you aware of. The rights available to you depend on our reason for processing your information.

Your right of access

You have the right to ask us for copies of your personal information. This right always applies.

Your right to rectification

You have the right to ask us to rectify information you think is inaccurate. You also have the right to ask us to complete information you think is incomplete. This right always applies.

Your right to erasure

You have the right to ask us to erase your personal information in certain circumstances.

Your right to restriction of processing

You have the right to ask us to restrict the processing of your information in certain circumstances.

Your right to object to processing

You have the right to object to processing if we are able to process your information because it is in our legitimate interests, for statistical purposes or direct marketing purposes.

Your right to data portability

This only applies to information you have given us. You have the right to ask that we transfer the information you gave us from one organisation to another or give it to you.

Your right in relation to automated decision making and profiling.

HWNT does not use any of your personal data to make automated decisions. We may create profiles of our clients in order to ensure that they only receive information that is appropriate for them. You have the right to stop us doing this and can do so by contacting us in writing at the address given.

For more information about your rights you can visit the ICO website

<https://ico.org.uk>

National data opt-out

Healthwatch North Tyneside complies with the National data opt-out procedures which enable you to opt out from the use of your data for anything other than your individual care and treatment.

For information on how to do this please contact us using the details given below.

How to complain

If you are unhappy about the way we handle your personal information, please let us know verbally or in writing by contacting us at the address given below.

We will explain how we have processed your personal information and if we have made a mistake will tell you how we will put this right.

If you are still dissatisfied, you may report your concern to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) by contacting:

Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow SK9 5AF

Tel. 0303 123 1113

Contacting us

If you have any questions about this privacy notice, the practices of our website, or your dealings with us via the site or any other way, please contact us at:

Post: FREEPOST HEALTHWATCH NORTH TYNESIDE

Email: info@hwnt.co.uk

Tel. 0191 263 5321

This privacy notice was last updated in June 2026