

Thurrock Council

Public Health team

Privacy Notice, June 2017

1. Background

- 1.1 The Thurrock Council Public Health team has a wide range of responsibilities related to understanding and improving the health, wellbeing and care needs of local communities and ensuring that differences in health outcomes are tackled and addressed by working to improve the health of the most disadvantaged members of the community.
- 1.2 As such, along with all local authorities, we have a duty to improve the health of the population we serve. To help with this, we use data and information from a range of sources, including data collected at the registration of a birth or death or from records of hospital treatment, to understand more about the health and care needs and the population health outcomes in our area.

2. Who we hold information about

- 2.1 We hold information about people we have a responsibility for in respect of our Public Health and health improvement functions. This will include residents of Thurrock, people receiving health and care services in Thurrock and people who work or attend school in Thurrock.
- 2.2 Under our statutory obligation to provide a public health advice service to our local NHS clinical commissioning group (CCG), this also extends to people resident in Thurrock CCG's area or registered with one of the CCG's general practices.

3. What information we hold

- 3.1 We receive some data, containing identifiers, to enable us to carry out Public Health functions that are not related to direct care. Some of these data are provided to us under specific data access agreements and an example of this is provided below in section 7 about *Access to Office for National Statistics (ONS) births and deaths data*.
- 3.3 Information that relates to an identifiable living individual is called *personal data*. This could be one piece of data – for example, a person's name or a collection of data, such as name, address and date of birth.

4. How we collect this information

- 4.1 This information may be shared with us by another organisation due to us having a role in a service they are providing, or as part of providing local data analysis to support decisions related to Public Health functions like the commissioning of services or improving and protecting the public's health. This will include organisations such as national and local NHS bodies, the Office for National Statistics, NHS Digital, and schools.

5. How we use the information

- 5.1 The Public Health team uses data and information as part of the planning, commissioning and monitoring of services. This is to help ensure that services meet the needs of people now and in the future, that we take steps to improve and protect the public's health, that we work to reduce inequalities in health and that we provide an advisory service to the local NHS commissioner (NHS Thurrock CCG). These functions include:
- producing assessments of the health and care needs of the population, in particular to support the statutory responsibilities of the:
 - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
 - the Director of Public Health's Annual report
 - the local Health and Wellbeing Strategy
 - identifying priorities for action
 - informing decisions on (for example) the design and commissioning of services,
 - assessing the performance of the local health and care system and to evaluate and develop them
 - undertaking equity analysis of trends, particular for vulnerable groups
 - supporting clinical audits
 - providing the mandated healthcare public health advice service to the local CCG

In functions such as those listed above, the information is used in such a way that individuals cannot be identified and personal identifiable details are removed as soon as possible in the processing of the data. These are known as *secondary use* cases. Depending on the circumstances, the data will be anonymised or de-identified (pseudonymised).

Anonymised data is information which does not identify an individual directly and which cannot reasonably be used to determine identity. Anonymisation does not allow information about the same individual to be linked in the same way that pseudonymisation does and is therefore more likely to be used for 'one-off queries' of data rather than consistent trend analysis.

Pseudonymisation (also known as de-identification) refers to the process of replacing personally identifiable information relating to a patient/service user with an alternative 'identifier' (such as a randomised reference number instead of their unique NHS number) in order that their data can be analysed appropriately (for example as part of trend analysis) without their personal identifiable data being disclosed unnecessarily.

- 5.2 The council has entered into a contract with MedeAnalytics to provide analytical services for risk stratification and to aid commissioning of services. The work they do involves extracting de-identified/pseudonymised data directly from council systems and linking it with data from different health sources, so a complete longitudinal record of a patient's condition, history and care can be devised, but obscuring the 'real-world' identify of the individual patient to those working with the data unless they are directly involved in the provision of care to that patient.
- 5.3 MedeAnalytics Pseudonymisation at Source system has been confirmed by the Information Commissioners Office as sufficiently de-identifying patient identifiers before it leaves the originating source, as well as receiving approval from the Confidentiality Advisory Group who provides guidance to the Secretary of State for Health.

6. Who we share information with

- 6.1 Information is only shared with other organisations where their involvement is required to provide a service, for us to comply with our Public Health responsibilities or where we are under a legal requirement to share it. The organisations we may need to share information with include organisations such as national and local NHS bodies, the Office for National Statistics, NHS Digital, other local authorities and schools. Any sharing will be assessed to ensure the organisations will meet the same standards of security and confidentiality as we do.
- 6.2 Further details on how we keep information secure can be found on the council's main privacy page.

7. Access to ONS births and deaths data

7.1 Introduction

NHS Digital requires us to include further specific detail in our Privacy Notice about access to, and use of, ONS Births and deaths data. ONS mortality data are supplied to us via the Primary Care Mortality Database (PCMD) and the PCMD holds data about people who have died in our area, as provided at the time of registration of the death, along with additional GP details, geographical information, details about the cause of death and associated administrative details. ONS births data holds information about births in our area, which is collected at birth registration, and is supplied to us in securely emailed text files.

Our access to these data is by application to NHS Digital and is available for use by Public Health analysts in local authorities for statistical purposes to support Public Health functions. Data supply and management is covered by this agreement with NHS Digital.

The terms of this agreement stipulates that data are supplied to us under specific legislation and for specific purposes. Access is permitted under section 42 (4) of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, as amended by section 287 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, for the purpose of statistical analysis for local authority Public Health purposes. NHS Personal Confidential Data (PCD) is released under regulation 3 of the Health Service (Control of Patient Information) Regulations 2002 and can only be used for public health purposes.

This ONS births and deaths data are of significant value to the local authority as it enables our analysts to respond to local public health needs. Evaluation of births and deaths in our local area allows us to perform the following:

- measuring the health, mortality or care needs of the population, for specific geographical area or population groups
- planning, evaluating or monitoring health and social care policies, services or interventions
- protecting or improving the public health, including such subjects as the incidence of disease, the characteristics – for example, age, gender, occupation – of persons with disease, the risk factors pertaining to sections of the population, or the effectiveness of medical treatments

7.2 Identifiers included in data relating to deaths (PCMD)

Data relate to the deceased, the family of the deceased, people involved in the care of the deceased and people involved in the administration of the death and include:

- deceased's address
- postcode of usual residence of the deceased
- postcode of place of death
- NHS number
- date of birth
- date of death
- maiden name – PID field specified by NHS Digital / ONS but not present in current PCMD
- name of certifier
- name of coroner
- cause of death – ICD10 coded cause of death will be retained in the data set used by PCMD data processors and analysts, all having completed the relevant approvals

7.3 Identifiers included in data relating to births

Data relate to the birth, the mother of the new born and administrative details about the birth and include:

- address of usual residence of mother
- place of birth
- postcode of usual residence of mother and postcode of birth of child
- NHS number of child
- date of birth of child

7.4 Data processing and secondary analysis

In order to gain access to, process, store and analyse births and deaths data appropriately and safely we do the following:

- Access to the births and deaths data, whether identifiable data or anonymised data, is restricted to those staff members who have signed the appropriate NHS Digital data access agreements. The data are stored on our IT network at a location that is restricted to those staff.
- Access to the source identifiable data is restricted to those staff who have been nominated as data processors for the births and deaths data.
- For those staff engaged in secondary analysis, we have removed the identifiable data, as this is not routinely required for the permitted uses of the data.
- Publication of the outcome of secondary analysis is limited to permitted purposes, is derived from de-identified data and is restricted to the aggregate results of that analysis in line with our Data Access Agreement and ONS rules on the uses of health based statistical data and disclosure.
- The information are only used for the purpose(s) described above and use will meet the criteria and principles established in the ONS *Disclosure Control Guidance for Birth and Death Statistics* (ons.gov.uk/methodology/methodologytopicsandstatisticalconcepts/disclosurecontrol/guidanceforbirthanddeathsstatistics).

- We are not permitted to, or have no business need to, link the deaths and births data directly with any other data. We do, however, assimilate the data with other sources of data, information and evidence in order to carry out our Public Health responsibilities.

Further details about the deaths data (PCMD) can be found on the NHS Digital website: content.digital.nhs.uk/pcmdatabase

8. Opting out

- 8.1 You have the right to opt out of Thurrock Council Public Health team receiving or holding your personal identifiable information. There are occasions where service providers will have a legal duty to share information, for example for safeguarding or criminal issues. The process for opting out will depend on the specific data and what programme it relates to. For further information, please contact the Information Governance team by the contact details provided below.

9. Accessing your information and further queries

- 9.1 The Thurrock Public Health team is part of Thurrock Council. The council is registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioner's Office (Registration Number Z8228055) under the Data Protection Act (1998). Further details about how the council processes personal data can be found in our registration on the Information Commissioner's website at ico.org.uk/ESDWebPages/Entry/Z4849790
- 9.2 The council's NHS Information Governance Toolkit status can be found at www.igt.hscic.gov.uk.
- 9.3 If you would like to see the information that is held about you, you can make a request for this to the council's Information Governance team. They can also be contacted if you have a query or complaint about the use of your information.
- 9.4 The Information Commissioner's Office is the national regulator for compliance with the Data Protection Act who can provide independent guidance: ico.org.uk.