

Who will see this information and how will it be stored?

Your full health record can **only** be seen by the staff directly involved in your care.

For research and planning, **some** information may be shared beyond those involved in your care. For example, to the people who plan NHS services.



In these instances, the **minimum** amount of information necessary will be passed on. Most of the time, names and other identifying information will be removed from this data.

Information that could identify a patient is only shared if it is **absolutely necessary**.

In all cases, patient information is stored and protected in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

What if I don't want to share this information?

You do **not** have to share personal information if you do not feel comfortable doing so.

You can **stop** the sharing of your patient information for research and planning purposes through the National Data Opt-Out. For further information, visit nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters.

The care provided to you will **not** change if you opt-out.



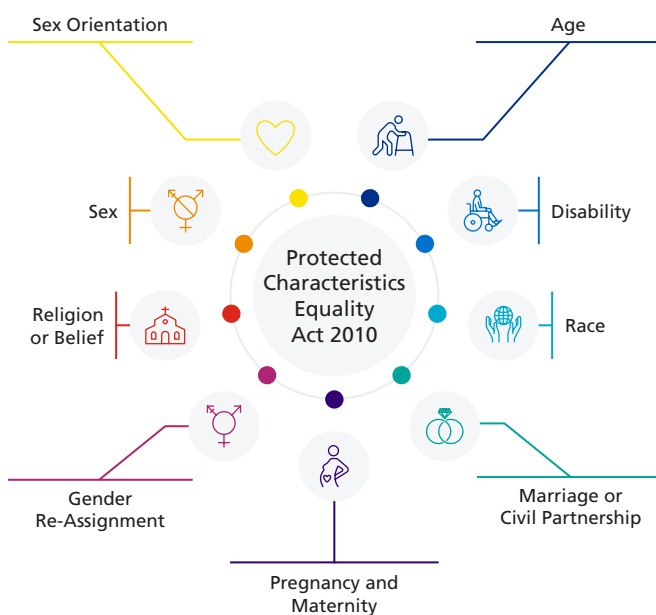
Collecting protected characteristics information



Why the NHS may ask for information about your identity and life circumstances, and how this information will be used

What are protected characteristics?

As set out in the Equality Act 2010, it is illegal to discriminate against anyone based on the **9 'protected characteristics'**. We have a duty to our patients to advance equality across these groups.



We are also committed to advancing equality for **inclusion health** groups, a term we use to describe people who are socially excluded. For example, this includes asylum seekers and refugees.

Why is it important for us to collect information about protected characteristics?

Mental health inequalities exist across protected characteristics and inclusion health groups, with some populations being more likely to experience mental illness. For example, people who are homeless or sleeping rough.

We need more data to understand these health inequalities, to make sure we can improve services so that they are inclusive for all people.



What will we use this information for?

1

We can use information about your identity and life circumstances to **improve the individual care** you receive.



For example, if we know that an individual seeking mental health support identifies as LGBTQ+, we can confidentially direct them to The BeYou Project, an LGBTQ+ specific service in Kent and Medway.

2

We can also use this information to **improve health services**, through research and planning.



For example, if we know that an area has a large ethnic minority community, we can make sure our local mental health services provide more culturally appropriate care to the community.