

GDPR data extraction

Dear CCG (cc LMC)

I am writing to inform you that Ripon Spa Surgery will not be enabling data harvesting for the purposes of GDPR under the current plans.

We believe that it would be both inappropriate and illegal to do so as it would mean releasing potentially identifiable health data without the data subjects' express consent. Furthermore that data would, we understand, be held for an indefinite period of time which would also seem to breach the laws governing the processing of sensitive data.

The purpose to which this information might be put is unclear, as are the circumstances under which the records might be de-anonymised. We are therefore unable to obtain informed consent from our patients prior to release of the data; in any case I argue that it is not our role to seek consent on behalf of a third party who wants to access the records - that role lies with NHS Digital who should contact each patient to obtain specific informed consent for the use of their data.

Finally, and on a more general note, I think the patient-level health data that we hold is an extremely valuable 'raw material' for many businesses. That data is held by general practices but is owned by the data subjects, the patients themselves. I do not think that they should be expected to hand over this resource without any understanding of who stands to benefit from it, and without some mechanism of ensuring that the value of the data is shared with those who own it.

I ask you to consider following the lead of NHS North East London CCG in advising all local practices to withhold the records they hold from the GDPR data collection until the points above have been satisfactorily addressed