

## Factsheet 3 - 01 September 2010 (2 Pages)

### Your personal information – the records we keep about you

#### What are records and why do we hold records about you?

Like most organisations Devon County Council Adult & Community Services, need to keep records so we can provide an efficient and effective service to people. We keep records about each person we work with. These records are also known as case files and may be written down (manual records), or held on computer. They may include:

- basic details about you such as your name, address, date of birth, and the name of your doctor
- letters and correspondence from you
- notes and reports about any help, care and services you are receiving or may need to receive in the future
- records of decisions made about the support and services you need
- relevant information from social care or health professionals, or those who care for you or know you well.

It is important that we keep your records accurate and up to date. To help us do this it is important that you provide us with complete and accurate information about yourself and tell us as soon as possible if there are any changes, such as a new address.

#### Using your personal information

Your personal information may be used in a number of ways, for example to:

- help you to make decisions about your personal care and support
- help us to work with you and agree the care and services you need
- make sure your care is safe and effective
- work effectively with others who also provide you with care or services.

#### How we keep your records confidential

Everyone working for Devon County Council has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential and hold it in strict confidence.

We may need to share some information about you with other organisations such as the health service, service providers or agencies who are working with us, so we can all work together for your benefit. We only use or pass on information about you if others are involved in your care or provide a service.

Anyone who receives information from us is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential and secure.

We will not disclose your information to other organisations without your permission, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These may include: when your health and safety or the health and safety of others is at risk, or where we are required by law to pass information on, such as where a Court Order has been issued.

You can choose not to give us permission to share your information. This will not stop you from receiving help, but may limit how we are able to support you. To help you decide, we will discuss this

with you and how it may affect our ability to provide you with care, and any other options you may have.

## **Storing information**

The information we use will be held securely on file and on computer. We will make sure that only authorised people who are involved in your care have access to your records.

Once your service or need for care has ended or the case has been closed, the information will be retained then disposed of securely in line with legal requirements and/or council policy on keeping information.

## **What you can do to keep your own personal information secure**

Look after your personal information and keep it very secure so that it doesn't get lost or fall into the wrong hands. Only let others have access to your information if you are sure it is necessary.

## **Who are our partner organisations?**

Adult & Community Services work in partnership with a number of other organisations to deliver a more 'joined up' or integrated service. Your information may be shared with:

- Strategic Health Authorities
- NHS Trusts
- General Practitioners (GPs)
- Ambulance Services

Your information may also be shared with the following (subject to strict agreements describing how it will be used):

- Voluntary or privately run organisations providing care services
- Local Authorities
- District Councils

## **How can you see the information we hold about you?**

You have a right to ask for a copy of the information we hold about you and ask us to correct any factual mistakes. If you would like to see your records you can make a written request to Devon County Council by using either a form available on the website or by writing a letter. See **Factsheet 4 - Seeing your Records**, available on the link below, which tells you how you can do this.

## **Further information**

If you would like to know more or have any questions about how we use your information, please speak to the social care professionals concerned with your care.

**See also:** Our **Leaflet 3. Compliments, Comments & Complaints**

**Further factsheets** can be found online at [www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets](http://www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets)

If you have any further questions please contact **Care Direct 0845 1551 007**

A large print version of this factsheet is available on [www.devon.gov.uk/largeprint-factsheets](http://www.devon.gov.uk/largeprint-factsheets) but if you would like it in a different format such as Braille or audio, or in a different language, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0845 155 1015 or email [customer@devon.gov.uk](mailto:customer@devon.gov.uk).

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