

National data opt-out – plain language summary

Please note: Only staff working directly on the Manchester Self-Harm Project will have access to your data. Your identifiable patient information will be held securely and will NEVER be shared with anyone for any reason.

The inclusion of your data in this work will help us to make accurate recommendations and improve care and safety for people who self-harm. Service users were involved in the creation of this summary.

The Manchester Self-Harm Project has been recommended an exemption from applying national data opt-outs to the data we collect. This is because our work is important for improving the care and safety of people who self-harm and people who may be at risk of suicide.

For example, from our data we can advise health services and policymakers on:

- who might be at highest risk of self-harm;
- whether self-harm has increased or decreased over time;
- what treatments and care options are the most effective for people who self-harm.

To continue helping to improving care and safety for people who self-harm, it is vital that we collect accurate information on all people who attend Manchester A&E departments after self-harm.

Losing information on people who have chosen to opt-out of sharing their data could have a large impact on the conclusions we draw from analysing the information and have a negative impact on patient care.

NHS research has suggested that some groups of people are more likely to choose to opt-out of sharing their data, such as homeless people, those from ethnic minority groups, or people from the LGBT community. If they were excluded from our data collection, it may incorrectly look like self-harm is not common among these groups when, in fact, they might be at high risk.

Because of the importance of our work, and the need to collect accurate information, we have been recommended an exemption from the national data opt-out by the [Confidentiality Advisory Group at the Health Research Authority](#).

This is an independent body who provide expert advice on the use of confidential patient information. The Confidentiality Advisory Group conducted a review of the project and decided it is in the interest of patients and the public for the Manchester Self-Harm Project to continue to collect patient data even when someone has opted out of sharing their health records.

How we use your data

The Manchester Self-Harm Project takes the security and confidentiality of your data very seriously. We only collect the information we need to carry out our work successfully and try to limit the amount of identifiable information we collect. You can see further details on what information we collect under the section titled 'Information we collect' on the main [data security and privacy](#) page.

We follow very strict security protocols, and all staff are trained on data security and management. All electronic records are secured on an encrypted server that is not connected to the internet. Any movement of identifiable information takes place only on the encrypted NHS email system, or locally via encrypted and password protected USB memory sticks.

We would like to reassure you that we would never share your health information with anyone outside of the Project, for any reason. We only ever use completely anonymous grouped data in our papers and reports to ensure that no individual can be identified.

There will be no record of your data being collected by the project team on your health records, and there will be no impact on your direct care or treatment from your information being included in our work.

How to remove your data from our project

Although we have been recommended an exemption from national data opt-out, if you think we might hold data on you, you can still request that we remove your individual information from our project by contacting us directly.

Please see the information in the 'How to request removal of your data' section on the main [data security and privacy](#) page.