



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

Public Health England: National Drug and alcohol Treatment Monitoring System – what we do, how we use personal information, and your options

This leaflet is about the Public Health England (PHE) National Drug and alcohol Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS). It explains why we need to know about people who use drug and alcohol services. It explains who we share information with and how we keep the information we use safe. It tells service users about the choices they can make about their own information.

What NDTMS is and does

PHE's role is to look after the country's health and wellbeing and try to make it better. Part of our job is to look at how many people use drug and alcohol services in England. We also look at how well these services help people with drug and alcohol problems. We do this to try to make sure everyone receives the best treatment possible.

When service users meet with their drug and alcohol key worker, the key worker will ask questions and keep a record of the treatment the service user receives. This is the service user's personal information and it is recorded to make sure they get the best help possible.

If the service user agrees, some of this information is shared with PHE. PHE has a system called NDTMS where this information is kept securely.

You can find out more about PHE here:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england

There is more about the information PHE uses to do its job here:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england/about/personal-information-charter

What information NDTMS collects and why

PHE use NDTMS to collect some personal information about the people who use drug and alcohol treatment services. This includes their initials, date of birth, gender, a clinic or national prison ID number unique to you, the local authority area in which you live and the first part of their postcode. PHE can only receive this information if the person agrees. PHE never use NDTMS to collect or store full names and addresses.

NDTMS holds information about the types of substances people use, the treatment they receive and how long they use the service for. This information is used to:

- look at how effective drug and alcohol treatment services are
- plan and improve services to meet the needs of local people
- produce figures and support research about drug and alcohol use and treatment

PHE never publishes any NDTMS information that could be used to identify individual people.

We link NDTMS information to other systems. This helps us make sure the health and other needs of people who use drug and alcohol services are being met.

We link to hospital records. This helps us to understand more about the health of people who use drug and alcohol services. This information comes from [NHS Digital](#).

We link to benefits claims records. This helps us to improve work options for people who use drug and alcohol services. This information comes from the [Department for Work & Pensions](#).

We link to records from the Police National Computer. This helps us to show the effect that drug and alcohol treatment has on crime. This information comes from the [Ministry of Justice](#).

Only PHE links the information from NDTMS to information from these places. We do not send the information to these other places. Other places cannot use our information to work out who individuals are. Only a small number of people from PHE will ever see linked information.

How PHE protects the information on NDTMS

The law says that PHE must protect the NDTMS information we collect and use. We only keep the information we need, and PHE staff can only see the information they need to do their job.

Who PHE shares NDTMS information with and why

PHE shares NDTMS information with a team called the National Drug Evidence Centre. They are based at the University of Manchester. They produce reports about drug and alcohol use and treatment for PHE.

You can find out more at:

<http://research.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/epidemiology/NDEC>

Sometimes we share NDTMS information with researchers from other organisations such as universities. This is so we can find out more about the things that help people who use drug and alcohol services. PHE follows the laws about information sharing. We make sure that other places cannot work out who a person is from the information that we share.

Your personal information and your rights

If you use drug and alcohol services, your information can only be added to NDTMS if you agree.

If you say that you do not want PHE to have personal information about you, you can still use the drug and alcohol service. You will still get the same help and support.

Having information about people who use drug and alcohol services is really important. We hope that you will let PHE see your information now you know why we need it and that we make sure your information is kept private.

If you decide that you want your information removed, you can speak to your key worker or contact us at: Head of Public Accountability, Public Health England, Wellington House, 133–155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG. Or contact us by email at FOI@phe.gov.uk

If you have any concerns about how PHE may have used information about you, you can write to the PHE Data Protection Officer at the same address.

You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office if PHE has not been able to help. Information on how to contact the ICO can be found here <https://ico.org.uk/concerns> or you can call 0303 123 1113.

How to find out if NDTMS holds any information about you

You can write to us to find out if we hold any personal information about you at:
Head of Public Accountability, Public Health England, Wellington House, 133–155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG.

Or contact us by email at: FOI@phe.gov.uk.

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