

## Privacy notice – OpenSAFELY

| Version | Edited by | Date issued | Next review date |
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| 1       | H Wilson  | 17/12/2025  | December 2026    |

NHS England have been directed by the government to establish and operate the OpenSAFELY COVID-19 Service and the OpenSAFELY Data Analytics service. These services provide a secure environment that supports research, clinical audit, service evaluation and health surveillance for Covid-19 and other purposes.

Each GP practice remains the controller of its own GP patient data but is required to let approved users run queries on pseudonymised patient data. This means identifiers are removed and replaced as a pseudonym.

Only approved users are allowed to run these queries, and they will not be able to access information that directly or indirectly identifies individuals.

Patients who do not wish for their data to be used as part of this process can register a type 1 opt out with Highfield surgery. Here you can find additional information about OpenSAFELY.

About the NHS OpenSAFELY Data Analytics service

OpenSAFELY protects GP records, while allowing vital search for the NHS and public good.

OpenSAFELY is run by NHS England and strongly supported by the British Medical Association (BMA) and the Royal College of GPs (RCGP).

OpenSAFELY is software that researchers use to study health information. Developed by the University of Oxford and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for Covid-19, it is now being used to support wider research.

So far, 200 Covid-19 projects have been approved by NHS England, leading to over 90 research papers, as well as reports on topics such as Covid-19 vaccination uptake.

From July 2025, all GP practices in England using SystemOne (TPP) and EMIS Web (Optum) are required to enable NHS England approved researchers to use coded information (such as diagnoses, prescriptions and test results), joined to other health information, for important studies beyond Covid-19.

This pilot, the NHS OpenSAFELY Data Analytics service, runs until March 2027. NHS England is responsible for the data. The BMA and RCGP will review all applications.

### What information is available?

Researchers can use:

## *Highfield Surgery*

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- Codes for diagnoses, procedures, medications and test results
- Other details such as sex, age, living region, A&E and hospital information.

Researchers cannot use:

- Information that directly identifies a patient (such as name, address, mobile number)
- Written notes, letters, or images (such as patient photos, x-rays, or other scans).

### **Contact Details**

For questions about this Privacy Policy or how your data is used, please contact:

Data Protection Officer (DPO)

Heather Wilson

01253 204672

[Blackpool.highfieldenquiries@nhs.net](mailto:Blackpool.highfieldenquiries@nhs.net)

You may also contact the ICO: <https://ico.org.uk/>