



National Hip Fracture Database (NHFD)

Information for patients

Version 24, January 2026

What information is included in this document?

What is the National Hip Fracture Database?	3
What is clinical audit?	3
Who runs the National Hip Fracture Database?	3
What data do we collect?	3
How do we process your information?	4
Keeping your information safe	4
How the NHS and care services use your information	5
What to do if you don't want to be involved	5
Legal basis for collecting and processing your information	6
Need to know more?	6

What is the National Hip Fracture Database?

This hospital takes part in the National Hip Fracture Database (NHFD), which has been set up to improve the care of patients who have broken a hip, their thigh bone or the lower part of their pelvis.

The NHFD gathers data from hospitals so that it can show them how effective they are at providing treatment to patients across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Information is collected by hospital staff at the same time as they update your medical records and hospital computer systems (like the operating theatre computer records) and it is then entered onto a secure online tool provided by the NHFD IT provider, Crown Informatics.

What is clinical audit?

A clinical audit is an excellent way of improving patient care. Audits monitor the quality of the care received by patients and record information on treatment. The NHFD measures hospitals' performance against national and professional standards to provide regular feedback to health professionals.

This information enables individual trusts to review their performance against national standards and focus on areas where they can make improvements to patient care.

Who runs the National Hip Fracture Database?

The NHFD is run on behalf of the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) as part of the Falls and Fragility Fracture Audit Programme (FFFAP) run by the Royal College of Physicians (RCP).

This is a multidisciplinary national clinical audit carried out in partnership with a number of organisations:

- British Orthopaedic Association
- British Geriatrics Society
- Royal Osteoporosis Society
- The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

What data do we collect?

The audit collects the following personal data items: NHS number, full name, date of birth, sex and postcode.

An NHS number is a unique number which allows us to track the care a particular patient receives so we can use national statistics such as Civil Registration data to check that each person recovers from their hip fracture.

Other information we collect about your care includes:

- The type of fracture you have – which part of your hip, thigh bone or pelvis you have broken
- Your surgery – if you have had an operation, the type of operation you had and when you had it
- How long you stay in hospital
- The type of place you were living before you broke your hip, thigh bone or pelvis
- Whether you successfully returned to the same place
- Whether you have been prescribed any bone strengthening medication, and what type
- Whether you have had any assessments or treatments to prevent future falls.

How do we process your information?

The data controllers, who have overall responsibility for the collection, storage and processing of personal identifiable information are joint across HQIP, NHS England (NHSE) and Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW). However, HQIP and DHCW do not process any of the data.

We periodically send patient data to NHS England who link the records to Civil Registration data. In order to link the data, we need to provide identifiable data (NHS number, date of birth, sex and postcode) to NHS England who return to Crown Informatics, in addition, date of death data. By linking the data together, we are able to look at more aspects of quality of care without asking hospitals to enter more information into our database.

Once a year, patient data is sent to the University of Bristol for analysis, but no individual patient can be identified.

Every three months the University of Bristol also receives patient data which allows us to compare rates of survival in different hospital across the country for patient safety reporting.

Reports produced by the audit never contain NHS numbers or any information that could be used to identify anyone.

Anonymous data is also occasionally sent by Crown Informatics to our team at the RCP so we can review the quality of the data, support hospital teams who are finding it difficult and manage the 'day to day' running of the work. This is never patient level or identifiable data.

We sometimes get requests from hospitals, universities and academic or healthcare organisations who want to use the data we collect, for audit, service evaluation, or research. Numerous published research projects mean that the UK leads the world in understanding key aspects of high quality hip fracture care, what matters to patients and what makes a difference to their recovery after this injury. Data can be shared for research and non-research purposes subject to appropriate approvals.

We always ensure that the organisations that we agree to share data with have appropriate legal approvals and security arrangements in place before we share data. Whilst we always ensure the least identifiable data possible is made available, sometimes these organisations require identifiable data to be shared with the applicant or to be used for linkage to other datasets, for example Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Civil Registration data and/or Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW). Sometimes research can be achieved using data that has already been anonymised, in which case we may rely on HQIP's Overarching Research Database support for the National Clinical Audit and Patient Outcomes Programme which permits this re-use under S.251 of the NHS Act 2006 (Reference 24/CAG/0108). For more information on data sharing for uses outside of the NHFD, please see: [NCAPOP Privacy Notice – HQIP](#).

Keeping your information safe

It is really important that we take great care of your information and we take the responsibility of collecting and handling patients' personal data very seriously. It will be held safely on secure servers by Crown Informatics for the duration of the audit, which follows best practice in data protection and security¹. Crown Informatics securely store the personal information they receive and use appropriate security features to prevent any unauthorised access. Should the audit come to an end, audit data will be held for a further 5 years.

Staff at Crown Informatics only see personal details for database administration and must follow strict confidentiality rules. Neither the NHFD, nor HQIP (as the data controller) could ever sell patient data to third parties.

¹ The data collected are subject to strict rules about confidentiality including those of the General Data Protection Regulation (2018), the Health and Social Care (Safety and Quality) Act (2015) and to the recommendations of the Caldicott Report (1997).

How the NHS and care services use your information

The Royal College of Physicians is one of many organisations working in the health and care system to improve care for patients and the public.

Whenever you use a health or care service, such as attending Accident & Emergency or using Community Care services, information about you is collected in a patient record for that service.

The information collected about you when you use these services can also be used by other organisations for purposes beyond your individual care, for instance to help with:

- Improving the quality and standards of care provided
- Research into the development of new treatments
- Preventing illness and diseases
- Monitoring safety
- Planning services

Confidential patient information about your health and care is **only used** like this where allowed by law.

Data being used or shared for purposes beyond individual care does not include your data being shared with insurance companies or used for marketing purposes and data would only be used in this way with your specific agreement.

What to do if you don't want to be involved

The NHFD believes that national clinical audit works best when it includes information about as many patients as possible in order to get an accurate picture of hip fracture care being provided. The NHFD is therefore exempt from the [National Data Opt-out \(NDO\)](#). This is due to concerns over patient safety if it were applied (where the loss of this data would reduce the ability of the audit to detect signals of concern over patient care) and concerns over introduction of bias (as the NHFD patient cohort is more likely to opt out). Patients who have chosen to opt-out of having their data used for anything other than their care will be included in the NHFD unless they specifically request not to be included. If you do not want your information to be included in the audit you should speak to a member of your clinical team, or contact us on fffap@rcp.ac.uk, 020 3075 2395 or the postal address at the end of this leaflet. The clinical team will ensure that your information is not included in the audit. By not participating in the NHFD your care and treatment will not be affected. Scotland and Wales do not operate a national opt-out programme but patients are still able to object to being included in individual audits, such as this one, under GDPR.

NHFD data is collected under section 251 of the NHS Act 2006. This provides a temporary break in the legal requirements so that for these clearly stated purposes, the audit can collect data on patients without a consent form, which is the usual legal requirement.

If you are happy for your data to be used for the audit, but not to be shared with researchers, when appropriate legal supports have been met, you can specifically opt out of your data being used by researchers by contacting us: fffap@rcp.ac.uk

Right to complain

If you think information about you has been submitted to the National Hip Fracture Database and you want to have it removed please contact the hospital that treated you or our team at nhfd@rcp.ac.uk.

Alternatively, if you think that your information is being used inappropriately, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO): ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint

Legal basis for collecting and processing your information

Information is processed lawfully and fairly according to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 articles below:

- Article 6 (1) (e) processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller.
This is justified through commissioning arrangements which link back to NHS England, Welsh Government, and other national bodies with statutory responsibilities to improve quality of health care services.
- Article 9 (2) (i) processing is necessary for reasons of public interest in the area of public health, such as protecting against serious cross-border threats to health or ensuring high standards of quality and safety of health care and of medicinal products or medical devices, on the basis of Union or Member State law which provides for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the rights and freedoms of the data subject, in particular professional secrecy.

This is justified as NHFD aims to drive improvements in the quality and safety of care and to improve outcomes for patients.

Information is processed lawfully and fairly according to the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 Schedule 1, part 1, point 3 (public health): This condition is met if the processing—

- (a) is necessary for reasons of public interest in the area of public health, and
- (b) is carried out—
 - (i) by or under the responsibility of a health professional

The NHFD has Section 251 support (reference 25/CAG/0032) to collect patient data without needing to obtain individual patient consent to do so.

Need to know more?

If you would like more information about the National Hip Fracture Database or would like to see copies of the audit reports, please contact us or visit our website.

www.nhfd.co.uk

020 3075 2395

NHFD@rcp.ac.uk

Falls and Fragility Fracture Audit Programme
Royal College of Physicians
11 St Andrews Place
Regent's Park
London NW1 4LE

Tel: +44 (0)20 3075 2395

Email: fffap@rcp.ac.uk

www.rcp.ac.uk