



DATA PROTECTION POLICY

This is a statement of the data protection policy written and adopted by Round the Clock Ltd. T/A 'The First Aid Team'

The responsibility for the updating and dissemination of the policy rests with the company's Data Controller/legal officer and the policy is subject to regular review to reflect, for example, changes to legislation or to the structure or policies of the company

Furthermore it must also be stated that whilst legislation places certain responsibilities and requirements on us to protect personal data, we are also conscious of the sensitivity of people with regards to the information held about them and will always adhere to a courteous and responsible as well as lawful attitude towards the processing of data acquired. All staff are expected to apply to the policy and to seek advice when required.

We need to collect and use certain types of information about people with whom it deals in order to operate and comply with legislation and external policies it may be bound by. These include current and past medical histories of patients, personal contact details of patients, social histories, staff details and details of suppliers/contractors and others with whom we conduct business.

We may occasionally be required by law to collect and use and share certain types of information to comply with the requirements of National Health Service (NHS) trusts, government departments such as the Department of Health and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), medical examiners, in the course of justice and certain other authoritative bodies.

There are only certain occasions and limited circumstances where data will need to be shared. This personal information must be dealt with properly however it is collected, recorded and used – whether on paper, electronically, or other means - and there are safeguards to ensure this in the Data Protection Act 1998.

We highly regard the lawful and correct treatment of personal information by us as important to the achievement of our objectives and to the success of our operations, and to maintaining confidence between those with whom we deal and ourselves.

To this end, we fully endorse and adhere to the Principles of data protection, as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.

The eight Principles require that personal information:

- 1) shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless specific conditions are met;
- 2) shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes;
- 3) shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed;
- 4) shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;
- 5) shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for the specified purpose(s);



6) shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the Act;

7) should be subject to appropriate technical and organisational measures to prevent the unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data, or the accidental loss, destruction, or damage to personal data;

8) shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

Therefore, Round the Clock Ltd will, through appropriate management and strict application of criteria and controls:

- observe fully conditions regarding the fair collection and use of information;
- meet its legal obligations to specify the purposes for which information is used;
- collect and process appropriate information only to the extent that it is needed to fulfil our operational needs or to comply with any legal requirements;
- ensure the quality of information used;
- ensure that the information is held for no longer than is necessary;
- ensure that the rights of people about whom information is held can be fully exercised under the Act (i.e. the right to be informed that processing is being undertaken, to access one's personal information; to prevent processing in certain circumstances, and to correct, rectify, block or erase information that is regarded as wrong information);
- take appropriate technical and organisational security measures to safeguard personal information;
- ensure that personal information is not transferred abroad without suitable safeguards.

Data-sharing Policy;

External sharing;

On occasion, we may have a legal or policy-based obligation to share certain information held in the due course of operation and/or cooperation with external agencies.

Such information shared by us is usually by way of Patient Report Forms which are legal documents about a particular patient and their encounter with our ambulance staff.

In the event that access to controlled data is needed by an external authority they have a responsibility to request information *correctly* and we will then apply a set test to consider the request.

The process is as follows;

- The external authority appoints an appropriate representative to submit a request for controlled data to the Round the Clock Ltd Operations department by way of an official letter – telephone and email requests are never acceptable.
The letter must detail the reasons for the request, what the organisation intends to do with it or how it will use the information and how it will protect the information once provided to them.



- The operations department will acknowledge the request in writing immediately and will then consider, with advice from the legal officer if needed, the request, its reasonableness and any liability and outcomes associated with the request.
- If the request is deemed reasonable the subject of the data (the person whom the data belongs to or is about) will then be informed by writing of our decision to release the data, the reasons for doing so and how the external agency will continue to protect the data.
- The information will be provided to the external authority via a mutually agreeable method that is safe and trusted immediately.
- If the request is denied a letter detailing the reasons for the decision will be sent to the requesting body with a copy of the appeals process.
- If an Appeal is submitted it will be forwarded to the director of EMS and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

There are specific instances where this framework will not apply for example with regards to the course of a police or medical investigation. Such instances require by law that we cooperate with the concerned body if we believe the data will be used responsibly and to prevent or deter crime.

Internal sharing;

Controlled information, at times, needs to be shared internally within our departments for the purposes of patient advice and liaison, support and general enquiries.

On such occasions members of staff are required at all times to respect and keep safe personal data and only share it with other staff who must have access to it. Data is always transferred between departments securely and confidentially with the use of electronic methods, password-protected computer and database access and encryption to ensure that only authorised staff are able to view information.

All information is always securely stored and information pertaining to patients in particular is stored for a period of 10 years, this is a requirement.

Personal-use sharing;

If we hold any data about a person or organisation then that person or organisation has a right to request access to this data and to know what details we hold about them. The Data Protection Act 1998 awards people this right and places a statutory obligation on us to respect and honour all requests of this nature.

Some generic details will be held of course such as patients' names, addresses and contact details however further information such as family and social history, medical and drug history are also accessible on request. We will never mislead or prevent subjects from accessing information we hold about them.

In order to find out if we hold any information about a person or other entity or to access it a 'subject access request' must be made to us in writing explaining who the enquirer is and whether or not they would like particular information held about them or a complete record to be sent.



Information requests made in writing for specific details will incur a £10 charge for recovery of the information from secure storage and administration.

It is unlawful for VAT to be charged on these prices and as such we do not charge VAT.

Once the request has been received we will acknowledge the request immediately in writing and will then proceed to collate and return the information as soon as possible and in any case within 28 days. The information will be sent securely via a trusted and recorded delivery method.