



Lambeth DataNet

What is Lambeth DataNet?

Lambeth DataNet is a resource aimed at bringing better healthcare to everyone in the area. It uses anonymous information* collected from GP patient records to help plan and improve healthcare services.

What information is used?

The information collected includes data such as the area where patients live, age, gender, ethnicity, language preference, country of birth and religion. DataNet also collects information such as whether patients have long term conditions such as diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol levels and medication. However, this information is anonymous* and does not include anything written as text in the casenotes by the GP and cannot be linked to you. All the information comes from the form patients complete when they first registered with the GP practice and their treatment records. All identifying detail such as name, date of birth and address is removed from these records before they leave the GP's surgery.

How is the information used?

The information is shared by GPs with SE London Clinical Commissioning Group', Lambeth Public Health and researchers at King's College London, to identify patterns of illnesses and local health needs, to help plan the best ways of improving services and to make sure everyone can access good healthcare.

Why was it created?

Lambeth has a diverse and changing population, varying across ages, ethnicities and income, with some groups having better health than others. Lambeth DataNet was set up by local GPs, Public Health and researchers to provide up-to-date information about how the health needs of these groups differed in order to make changes to the ways health services were delivered.

What if I don't want to share my information with DataNet?

We hope to have information from all patients registered at GP practices in Lambeth. This will enable us to obtain information to reduce health inequalities and ensure a fair distribution of services to communities with the greatest health need.

However, if you are not happy about sharing your information to improve services, then you can opt out by letting your GP practice know. You can do this by writing to them, emailing them or going to the surgery.

Where can I find more information?

Speak to the practice manager at your GP surgery.

Who is involved with Lambeth DataNet?

Lambeth DataNet is managed by SE London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and guided by a Steering Group who represent a variety of community organisations and healthcare providers. This includes:

- Lambeth Public Health
- SE London Clinical CCG
- King's College London (Department of Primary Care)
- Healthwatch Lambeth.

How is information kept private and secure?

The information Lambeth DataNet uses is private and secure. Stored as anonymous data and held electronically at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, it cannot be linked to the patient by name, address or date of birth.

In some cases anonymised information* held by Lambeth DataNet may be linked with information held by a hospital or an accident and emergency department. In this case special permission is needed to match hospital NHS numbers to Lambeth DataNet records. You can find out more in the Department of Health document Information: to share or not to share.

There are very strict rules and procedures to decide who can access DataNet information and for what purpose. Every individual request for information is overseen by the Lambeth DataNet Steering Group and the Caldicott Guardian acting for SE London Clinical Commissioning Group. The information will never be shared with third parties for commercial purposes.

Why is Lambeth DataNet unique and different to other national information collection schemes?

Lambeth DataNet is unique for three reasons:

Lambeth DataNet collects local data, which is anonymised* at the source so no identifiers leave the general practices and no identifiers can be traced back to patients.

Lambeth DataNet information can be associated with individual GP practices so results can be used to improve services locally

- Data will never be shared for commercial purposes.

Information for professionals

Are you a public health professional?

For more information on how Lambeth DataNet has been used in commissioning or policy or if you work in Lambeth to provide healthcare or are interested in how we could use information from Lambeth DataNet to support commissioning or research please contact David Whitney, DataNet co-ordinator, at d.whitney@nhs.net

Are you interested in Lambeth DataNet research findings?

Researchers using data from Lambeth DataNet have published their findings. For more information on research publications, contact Mark Ashworth, Reader in Primary Care, King's College London: mark.ashworth@kcl.ac.uk

Are you interested in proposing a research question?

If you are affiliated with King's College London, the Biomedical Research Centre at Guys and St Thomas NHS Foundation Trust, SE London CCG or Lambeth Public Health, please contact Dr Mark Ashworth for further details at mark.ashworth@kcl.ac.uk

COVID-19 health service data:

We are supporting Guy's and St Thomas' Trust (GSTT) in developing a 'COVID Data Store' which would enable us to link primary care records in Lambeth Datanet with hospital data at GSTT. Again, this will use the same process as other database linkage projects using anonymised* codes to link patient healthcare records across primary and secondary care. The COVID data store will support research into COVID health inequalities and the links between COVID-19 infection in primary and secondary care.

Footnote:

** All health service data using primary care records in Lambeth DataNet is fully anonymised at the time when the data is extracted from primary care records. Therefore, no identifiable data leaves the practice. Instead of NHS numbers which are 'identifiable patient data', each set of records is extracted with an individual code which can never be linked back to the original record and cannot be used to identify any individual patient. This individual code is known as a 'pseudonymised code'. The pseudonymised code can never be converted back into an NHS number but if the same patient appears in two different NHS datasets, for example a primary care and a secondary care dataset, the pseudonymised codes should match, enabling the primary care and secondary care medical records to be joined up (a process known as 'database linkage'). Database linkage using pseudonymised codes can only be conducted if approved by the relevant Caldicott Guardian.*