



Information Sheet for Individuals consenting to agree to take part in a HSSIB Investigation

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Health Services Safety Investigation Body (HSSIB) was set up to carry out independent investigations and make recommendations about how NHS funded healthcare can be improved to the benefit of all users of NHS services across England.

The HSSIB was established as an independent investigations body on a statutory footing, via the Health and Care Act 2022. HSSIB's purpose is to investigate incidents or accidents which have or are likely to evidence risks affecting patient safety and identify areas for improvement. We aim to provide meaningful safety recommendations and share what we learn across the whole of the healthcare system for the benefit of everyone, including young people.

It is not the function of the HSSIB in conducting investigations and publishing its reports to identify any wrong-doing nor to blame any specific Trust / service / person.

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS INVESTIGATION THEME OF WORKFORCE AND PATIENT SAFETY

The workforce challenges faced by the NHS in England present a significant risk to patient safety and staff wellbeing. These challenges include inadequate interoperable IT infrastructure, skills shortages in key areas of the NHS and a mismatch between demand for hospital care and the supply of staff and other resources to meet that demand. National reports and research have highlighted that these challenges are influenced by a shortage of NHS staff, and that there is a need to focus on recruitment and retention and consider the most appropriate workforce models for health and care in the future. To address these previously identified challenges, we can use our unique system-level perspective to propose ways to improve working conditions for NHS staff. We anticipate this in turn can help to improve patient safety.

We have already reviewed and analysed a range of patient safety intelligence and identified a range of issues that may be limiting the workforce's ability to deliver safe, efficient, and effective care. As a result, HSSIB has identified four areas for investigation focussed on the conditions in which the workforce is delivering patient care. This aim is for the investigations to identify opportunities for learning and to support improvements in the delivery of safe care. The investigations will consider how working conditions in the NHS can be optimised to support patient safety, while maintaining and improving staff wellbeing.

The four investigations are:

- **Workforce and patient safety: the digital environment** - considering design of the digital aspects of the work system, such as computer systems, with which staff and patients interact.
- **Workforce and patient safety: prioritising patient care** – considering how the ability of the clinical workforce to deliver face to face patient care is affected by undertaking additional tasks, for example administrative roles.
- **Workforce and patient safety: skill mix and staff integration**– considering how existing and new roles are implemented as part of the wider multi-disciplinary team to support safe and compassionate patient care.
- **Workforce and patient safety: temporary staff** – considering how temporary staff, including agency, bank and locum staff are supported to ensure they have the necessary skills, competencies and understanding to deliver safe patient care.

The investigations on the digital environment, prioritising patient care and skill mix will begin their focus in primary care (for example general practice), and community services (for example, care delivered at home, in community hospitals, intermediate care facilities, clinics and schools). The scope of the investigations may extend to secondary care (care in hospitals either as an emergency or for planned care) and tertiary care (highly specialised treatment) as the evidence is gathered. The temporary staff investigation will start with a focus on secondary care.

The four investigations will include conversations with relevant integrated care boards and integrated care partnerships within the integrated care systems, to maximise opportunities for learning.

We are keen to collect a diverse range of views that may also contribute to evidence of where inequalities exist for patients and the workforce. As part of the evidence collection, we intend to undertake observations with multidisciplinary teams, and carry out focus groups and interviews with NHS staff, patients and the public.

We also want to understand how learning can be used to enhance NHS staff wellbeing, as well as patient safety.

We may use quotes from our discussion in our investigation report, however, all your personal information will be anonymised, unless you ask us to put it in the report. The information you give us will be considered along with other evidence we collect and the findings, recommendations and draft report will be shared with you for comment.

Further supporting information about HSSIB and our privacy policy is available on the HSSIB website (see <https://www.hssib.org.uk/privacy-notice/>). You also have my contact details if it would be helpful to discuss any issues or queries at any point during the investigation. If you wish, you can also contact the Information Governance team on ig@hssib.org.uk if you have any further questions or queries.

If you need to take time to read and digest this information or have further questions before agreeing to any HSSIB request, we fully understand and support you in this. We also understand that you have the right not to take part in our investigation, but we greatly welcome your help and support.

HOW LONG WILL THE INVESTIGATION TAKE?

The individual investigations are likely to take several months before any recommendations are made. This is because we will spend time looking at all the information we have collected for this investigation to identify what opportunities there are for national learning across the NHS in England.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INVESTIGATION?

Each individual investigation will produce a HSSIB investigation report (and/or interim reports) that may make safety recommendations, safety observations or identify local learning to inform improvements in support of patient safety and staff wellbeing. No individual staff member or health provider will be named in any reports.

The findings from all four investigations, and additional HSSIB intelligence, may then contribute to a future national learning report to allow for common themes or issues seen across the investigations to be aggregated and further safety recommendations, safety observations or local learning to be identified. Everyone involved in the investigation will have an opportunity to review and comment on the draft reports before publication. We are also happy to answer any questions you might have about the process of the investigation at any point.

INFORMATION ABOUT YOU THAT HSSIB MAY USE

Personal data is information that can identify you either by itself or in combination with other information and this may come in many formats. It can be electronic, paper, given verbally, photographic, video. HSSIB will only process personal data about you that relates to its investigations and in accordance with its legislative powers, via the [Health and Care Act 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

Information that we process may include the records of your interview(s) with an HSSIB investigator.

HOW HSSIB MANAGES YOUR INFORMATION

HSSIB will hold your personal data on encrypted laptops and securely on our systems and network that meet international standards and which are housed within data centres in the United Kingdom and the European Economic Area. This means that your data is only accessible to those who are legally allowed to see it.

HSSIB has in place appropriate security to prevent access by individuals not directly employed by HSSIB. Access to our systems is reviewed regularly. Systems are setup so that only HSSIB staff and expert advisers can process your data.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE INVESTIGATION CONCLUDES?

HSSIB will keep a copy of your personal data in line with UK law. For processing purposes and retention periods please email our Information Governance team on ig@hssib.org.uk.

At the end of the investigation HSSIB will publish its investigation report. No individuals will be named in the report, including yourself – your data will be anonymised, which means that no one can identify you.

HSSIB may process suitably anonymised information for research and analysis purposes to help inform future investigations and monitor improvements within the NHS. You will get an opportunity to note whether you consent to this use of the information via our consent form.

We understand that you may need time to consider if you want to be involved in this investigation, please take this information sheet away to read carefully. If you have further questions before agreeing to participate please email our Information Governance team on ig@hssib.org.uk. We also understand that you have the right not to take part in our investigation, but we greatly welcome your help and support.

YOUR INFORMATION, YOUR RIGHTS

HSSIB will request, collect and use data relating to individuals under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Articles 6 (1) (a) and 9 (2) (a). In a nutshell, HSSIB will process

your data because you have given HSSIB **explicit consent** to do so for the purposes explained in this leaflet.

Under GDPR you have the following rights in relation to HSSIBs processing activities:

- 1) You or someone you nominate can access the data we hold about you. Subject to identity checks we will provide you with all data that we hold about you.
- 2) You have the right to ask for the information that you provide to HSSIB to be amended if you believe it is inaccurate.
- 3) You have the right to be forgotten. You can ask for your information to be deleted unless we are subject to any legal duty of additional processing of data; if any exist we will explain these to you. Where there is no legal duty to keep your data for 'other' processing, HSSIB will immediately suspend processing your data. Your data will be cleared from our network after 120 days.
- 4) HSSIB will not sell your data and will use it only for the purposes explained in this leaflet.
- 5) Unless required by UK law, i.e. a court order overriding public interest, we will not release your personal information. Disclosure of your information outside the HSSIB must be approved by the Chief Investigator and be consistent with the safe space principle. We will inform you prior to any release (unless this is not permitted by UK law i.e. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000). Rest assured that any circumstances whereby we would be compelled to release your information are rare.
- 6) If the "vital interests" (generally meaning matters of life and death) of an individual are impacted by our investigation and the information we gather, we may release certain information to other relevant bodies. If appropriate we will inform you prior to any release.
- 7) If HSSIB become aware of any evidence of serious, continuing risk to patient safety we may release certain information to the appropriate regulatory/investigatory bodies. Disclosure of your personal information outside the HSSIB must be approved by the Chief Investigator and be consistent with the safe space principle.
- 8) You do not have to agree take part in our investigation. This will not affect the treatment you currently receive or any future provision of care.

To exercise any of your rights please email ig@hssib.org.uk

