

7 Golden Rules to Information Sharing

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Data Protection Act 1998 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Share with informed consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 1998, you may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgment on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be certain of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and wellbeing: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

The following 'golden rules' have been taken directly from the following government guidance; ["Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers"](#) HM Government, Updated May 2024