



# Health Research Authority

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18 December 2025

Dr Marisa Mason  
National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Deaths (NCEPOD)  
Ground Floor, Abbey House  
74-76 St John Street  
London  
EC1M 4DZ

Dear Dr Mason,

**Study title:** National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death  
**CAG reference:** PIAG 4-08(b)/2003

Thank you for your amendment request to the above non-research application, submitted for support under Regulation 5 of the Health Service (Control of Patient Information) Regulations 2002 to process confidential patient information without consent. Supported applications enable the data controller to provide specified information to the applicant for the purposes of the relevant activity, without being in breach of the common law duty of confidentiality, although other relevant legislative provisions will still be applicable.

The role of the Confidentiality Advisory Group (CAG) is to review applications submitted under these Regulations and to provide advice to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on whether an application should be supported, and if so, any relevant conditions.

## **Secretary of State for Health and Social Care support decision**

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, having considered the advice from the Confidentiality Advisory Group as set out below, has determined the following:

1. The amendment, to include the second retrospective case note review for 2025, investigating the management of rib fractures, is conditionally supported, subject to compliance with the standard conditions of support.

## **Amendment request**

In line with the original application, the applicant had been commissioned by HQIP to undertake two confidential reviews of case notes every year. This amendment covers the second of the reviews due to take place for 2025, which will explore current care pathways for patients with rib fractures and will aim to inform the development of national guidelines for the management of rib fractures, stimulate further research, and ultimately lead to improved outcomes and reduced preventable deaths.

The applicants aim to publish the results of the review in 2027.

## Confidentiality Advisory Group advice

The amendment request was considered by Chair's Action. The CAG Alternate Vice-Chair was content to recommend support. However the CAG Alternate Vice-Chair noticed that some of the links to further information did not work in all of the patient notification documents. The applicant is reminded to ensure that these all work prior to disseminating out. The CAG Alternate Vice-Chair also noticed that the privacy notice currently states; *'In order to carry out this work we have been given permission to collect and use this information under very strict conditions of confidentiality and data security by the Health Research Authority in England and Wales'*

However this application is non-research, and therefore a condition has been applied to update the privacy notice to; *'In order to carry out this work in England and Wales, we have been given 'section 251' support to collect and use this information under very strict conditions of confidentiality and data security by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, on advice from the Confidentiality Advisory Group (CAG)'*

## Confidentiality Advisory Group conclusion

In line with the considerations above, the CAG agreed that the minimum criteria under the Regulations appeared to have been met for this amendment, and therefore advised recommending support to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

## Specific conditions of support

1. Please update the privacy notice as described in this outcome letter, and provide an updated privacy notice to CAG within 1 month.
2. Confirmation provided from the DSPT Team at NHS England to the CAG that the relevant Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT) submission(s) has achieved the 'Standards Met' threshold: **Confirmed – The NHS England 24/25 DSPT review for National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death (NCEPOD) was confirmed as 'Standards Met' on the NHS England DSPT Tracker (by check of the NHS England DSPT Tracker)**

## Reviewed documents

<i>Document</i>	<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>
CAG Amendment form		28 October 2024
NCEPOD rib fractures protocol		October 2025
Patient Poster Rib Fractures		
Rib_Fracture_Patient Information Leaflet		
Rib_Fracture_Poster_Easy read		

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries following this letter. I would be grateful if you could quote the above reference number in all future correspondence.

Yours sincerely  
Caroline Watchurst  
Confidentiality Advisor

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Email: [cag@hra.nhs.uk](mailto:cag@hra.nhs.uk)

Enclosures: Standard conditions of support



# Health Research Authority

## Standard conditions of support

Support to process confidential patient information without consent, given by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, is subject to the following standard conditions of support.

The applicant and those processing the information will ensure that:

1. The specified confidential patient information is only used for the purpose(s) set out in the application.
2. Confidentiality is preserved and there are no disclosures of information in aggregate or patient level form that may inferentially identify a person, nor will any attempt be made to identify individuals, households or organisations in the data.
3. Requirements of the Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007 are adhered to regarding publication when relevant, in addition to other national guidance.
4. All staff with access to confidential patient information have contractual obligations of confidentiality, enforceable through disciplinary procedures.
5. All staff with access to confidential patient information have received appropriate ongoing training to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.
6. Activities remain consistent with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.
7. Audit of data processing by a designated agent is facilitated and supported.
8. The wishes of patients who have withheld or withdrawn their consent are respected.
9. Any significant changes (for example, people, purpose, data flows, data items, security arrangements) must be supported via formal amendment prior to changes coming into effect.
10. An annual review report is submitted to the CAG every 12 months from the date of the final support letter, for the duration of the support.
11. Any breaches of confidentiality around the supported flows of information should be reported to CAG within 10 working days of the incident, along with remedial actions taken / to be taken. This does not remove the need to follow national/legal requirements for reporting relevant security breaches.