# Staff Guidance on Data Sharing

**This guidance is relevant to staff who have responsibility for care or personnel records. The guidance should match the procedures you have in your organisation and should be supported with proper training. This is designed to sit alongside the Data Protection and Record Keeping policies.**

It is important to know what information should be shared and what needs to be kept confidential. You will receive training on proper information sharing as part of your induction and there will be training updates every year. If you feel like you need more training on this topic, or have any questions, please speak to your line manager.

## When can you share information?

It is important to consider the type of information and why you need to share it. For example: if you have details of somebody’s medical condition and their GP requests this information so that they can provide care, that’s a good reason to share.

## How do we share information safely?

As an organisation, we have the following policies in place to make sure that we always share information safely – no matter how this information is shared.

You need to follow our policies as part of your job. If you do not, you might face disciplinary action.

### Face- to-face conversations

* Make sure the person you are talking to has a right to the information they are asking for;
* Always ask if they would rather have private conversations in a private room;
* Always be aware of the risk that other people might overhear private conversations and make steps to prevent that from happening.

### Telephone Conversations

* Always confirm that the person is who they say they are;
* Only provide information that the person has a right to know;
* Be aware of who else can hear your phone call and make sure other people do not eavesdrop on your confidential call.

### Posting information

* Please provide any confidential information which needs to be posted to ***insert name here if applicable***;
* All confidential information must be posted to a named individual and marked as “Private and Confidential”;
* All confidential post will be sent as a signed-for delivery.

### Receiving faxed information

* As soon as a fax is received it must be removed from the machine; **note that this is particularly important if your fax machine is in a public area**
* Where necessary, contact the person who sent the fax to confirm that you have received it;
* Safely store the fax in the correct place as soon as possible.

### Sending information by fax

* Always double check the fax number before sending;
* Use a fax cover sheet which is marked "Private and Confidential";
* Only send faxes to a named person, not to a team;
* Tell the recipient that you are sending a fax and ask them to confirm receipt;
* Do not send faxes outside of the receiving organisation’s working hours;

### Emailing information

**Your staff should only be sending confidential information via email if you have secure email. If you do not, you should say:**

* Never send personal confidential via e-mail.

**If you do have access to secure email, you should add your policies here.**

### Other methods of sharing information

**This might include USB memory sticks, CDs, DVDs etc. Make sure what you include here matches your Record Keeping Policy.**