

MOTION ON NOTICE

City Council



Opting Out of NHS Patient Data Sharing With the Private Sector

Plymouth City Council recognises the crucial role our NHS services play in maintaining the health and well-being of our residents, and particularly their essential work during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The Council notes with concern plans by the U.K. Government to pool 55 million NHS patient records, including sensitive data on mental health, into a central database that will be made available to researchers and third parties in the private sector. The Council understands that while this data will be anonymised and given “codes” by NHS Digital they can be used to reveal the identity of the data’s owners if there is a “valid legal reason”. Privacy campaigners have said the plans are “legally problematic”.

The Council notes with particular concern the fact that there has been little public notice or political debate about these plans, and the fact that NHS patients only have until June 23 to opt-out of this data sharing, via an online form (1).

Understanding that a significant portion of our residents do not have reliable Internet access—particularly our residents living in poverty—the Council will undertake a prominent campaign in social media and the local press to advise Plymouth’s NHS patients about their right to opt-out of data sharing.

- 1) <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-collections-and-data-sets/data-collections/general-practice-data-for-planning-and-research/transparency-notice#opting-out-of-nhs-digital-collecting-your-data-type-1-opt-out->

Proposed by: Councillor Tudor Evans OBE

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