



# Health Research Authority

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31 July 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 first retrospective case note review for 2025, investigating the care of patients receiving chest drains, is 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 covered the first of the reviews due to take place for 2025, which will explore current care pathways for patients receiving pleural procedures (chest drains).

The applicants aim to publish the study in 2026, and identifiable data will be held until then.

## Confidentiality Advisory Group advice

The amendment requested was considered by the Confidentiality Advisory Group, who agreed that the amendment was in the public interest.

### 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. 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 2023/24 DSPT review for NCEPOD was confirmed as 'Standards Met' on the NHS England DSPT Tracker (checked 23 July 2025).

### Reviewed documents

<i>Document</i>	<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>
2024-25 (version 7) 8HH01 DSPT standards met certificate		
NCEPOD Pleural Procedures protocol FINAL		
PIAG 4-08(b) 2003_Pleural_Procedures_Amendment-request_ corrected 20230724		24 July 2025
Pleural Procedures_Patient Information Leaflet		
Pleural Procedures_Patient Poster		
Pleural Procedures_Patient_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

Kathleen Cassidy  
Confidentiality Advisor

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

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Enclosures: Standard conditions of support

### **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.