

Data Sharing Review

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Consultation paper on the use and sharing of personal information in the public and private sector

List of questions for response

We would welcome responses to the following questions set out in this consultation paper. Please follow the question order as set out in the consultation paper, leaving a blank response box for any questions not answered.

Please email your completed form to contact@datasharingreview.gsi.gov.uk

Alternatively you can send a hard copy response to:

Data Sharing Review Secretariat
5.26 Steel House
11 Tothill Street
London
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Thank you.

Section 1: Background

Question 1.

Comments: My interest in information sharing is to contribute to ensuring that personal information about myself, family, friends, acquaintances, and all other citizens of the UK cannot be misused or misplaced.

Section 2: Scope of personal information sharing, including benefits, barriers and risks of data sharing and data protection

Question 2.

Comments: a) The key benefit of sharing personal information between individuals is that it enables the efficient administration of society, as long as the individuals are known to be trustworthy and competent, and as long as the data shared with them is only that required for the completion of their specific task.
b) There are no benefits of sharing personal information to society.

Question 3.

Comments: The key risk of sharing personal information, to both individuals and society, is loss of confidentiality.

Question 4.

Comments: Recent reports have adequately demonstrated that sharing of personal information by government departments and employees is completely insecure and therefore has compromised the confidentiality of information on all citizens of the UK.

Question 5.

Comments: All public authorities seek to hold far more personal information than is absolutely necessary for their specific purposes and are not properly held to account for its security.

Question 6.

Comments: Private sector organisations have no reason to hold more information than they require for their purpose and are held to a much higher standard of data security.

Question 7.

Comments: There is no reason to search for more excuses to share, and therefore compromise security of, personal information.

Question 8.

Comments: No government departments should be sharing personal information because they clearly cannot be trusted to do so with a reasonable level of security.

Section 3: The legal framework

Question 9.

Comments: The DPA works satisfactorily, when it is properly enforced. It is not properly enforced in the case of government departments.

Question 10.

Comments: The second principle of the DPA is essential - private organisations adhere to the principle because they take a significant risk if they do not. Public authorities take little notice of the principle because they are not properly held to account under the terms of the act.

Question 11.

Comments: The lack of proper enforcement of the DPA to public authorities, and their individual employees, neuters the effectiveness of the DPA.

Question 12.

Comments: Full enforcement of the DPA, in its current guise, would be sufficient - no further amendment is necessary.

Question 13.

Comments: Cannot comment.

Question 14.

Comments: It is not necessary to legislate for any further statutory powers - strictly apply those that are in place. Hold people and public organisations to account for any insecure use or transfer of any personal information. Hold public bodies to account for every data field that they hold - force them to justify their reasons

and enforce deletion of any data held unnecessarily.

Question 15.

Comments: All legislation, to a greater or lesser degree, places an unreasonable burden on business.

Section 4: Consent and transparency

Question 16.

Comments: It should be clear to everybody concerned with data storage and handling, and be made particularly clear to all government employees, that all personal information is confidential to the individual and can NEVER be shared without their consent. Such information is not owned by an organisation - it is 'loaned' to the organisation by the individual, in order that sensible administrative procedures can proceed - no organisation has any RIGHT to hold, share or use that information.

Question 17.

Comments: Whether the requirement to gain consent to share information would create 'barriers' is of no consequence - it must be compulsory to gain consent, in every case, to obtain, hold, share and use personal information.

Question 18.

Comments: The necessary level of transparency can only be achieved when all government employees and departments are made to understand that it is a privilege, not a right, for them to hold, use and share personal information. They will then realise that their every action to obtain, store, use and share will carry with it a real risk of serious consequence if they fail in their duty of care.

Question 19.

Comments: Forget more talking, policy development, impact assessment, reviews, committees, consultations and research just implement current legislation effectively, especially in the case of government departments and employees.

Section 5: Technology

Question 20.

Comments: Not as much of an impact as it should have done on government departments. Why on earth are junior employees burning and posting discs when it is possible to make specifically filtered data sets available only to the person that has authority to receive them, in a securely encoded file format, over protected internet links ?

Question 21.

Comments: YES

Question 22.

Comments: No comment

Section 6: International comparisons

Question 23.

Comments: No.

Question 24.

Comments: Confidential information can be exchanged, over the internet, by placing encoded files on web pages invisible to search engines, and accessible only to people with the precise page address and password.

Question 25.

Comments: No

Question 26.

Comments: No

Section 7: Additional questions

Question 27.

Comments: No - focus on the central issue.

Question 28.

Comments: THIS IS NOT ROCKET SCIENCE - IMPLEMENT AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY AND ENFORCE CURRENT LEGISLATION.