

National Clinical Audit and Patient Outcome Programme (NCAPOP)

Annual information governance review of NCAPOP audit providers

Information for NHS hospital trusts who participate in NCAPOP clinical audits

This document provides information for NHS hospital trusts about the information governance requirements relating to the National Clinical Audit and Patient Outcome Programme (NCAPOP).

The NCAPOP audits are listed on The Quality Account List here: [20260121_NHSE-QA-List-2026-27_FINAL.pdf](#) Only those workstreams that are denoted by a tick in the last column of the Quality Account List '*Included in NCAPOP*' are covered by the information in this document.

The only NCAPOP exception is the National Obesity Audit which is exempt from this IG checklist given it falls under [National Obesity Audit Directions 2023 - NHS England Digital](#).

The other workstreams on the Quality Account List denoted by a cross in the last column are outside of the remit of HQIP's commissioning and information governance role.

The Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) acts as commissioner on behalf of NHSE for the NCAPOP workstreams. As such, HQIP conducts an annual information governance review of NCAPOP audit providers. This means that contracted clinical audit providers are required to demonstrate to HQIP their compliance with the below table 1 information governance contractual and legal requirements.

The NCAPOP providers are notified by HQIP of the outcome of the annual information governance checklist review. Where any non-compliance is ascertained, the NCAPOP audit providers are asked to comply with requirements, and a deadline date is set for completion. HQIP follows-up with the NCAPOP audit providers until full compliance is demonstrated.

If an NCAPOP clinical audit provider does not complete the information governance checklist (table 1) to HQIP's satisfaction and standards, HQIP will discuss this with the audit provider, agree an action plan and may request a pause to their work.

The same level of scrutiny is applied to the National Joint Registry, which although is not part of the NCAPOP programme, is hosted by HQIP and is under HQIP's data controllership.

HQIP and NHSE are joint data controllers for the NCAPOP programme.

Table 1		
Number	All NCAPOP audit providers are required to demonstrate annual compliance with the following information governance checklist	Rationale
UK GDPR and UK DPA lawful basis		
1.	<i>Compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) article 6 and article 9 legal basis</i>	<i>GDPR requirement</i>
2.	<i>Compliance with the UK Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 schedule 1 condition for processing information</i>	<i>UK DPA requirement</i>
Common Law Duty of Confidentiality lawful basis		
3.	<i>The legal basis under the common law (for England, Wales, Scotland and any other geographic areas, where applicable)</i>	<i>Legally required under the common law duty of confidentiality</i>
4.	<i>The Confidentiality Advisory Group (CAG) Section 251 approval reference number (if applicable)</i>	<i>A legal gateway which sets aside the requirement to obtain patients' consent when processing confidential patient data for non-research purposes</i>
5.	<i>The CAG Section 251 approval for research and ethics approval (if applicable)</i>	<i>A legal gateway which sets aside the requirement to obtain patients' consent when processing confidential patient data for research purposes.</i>
NCAPOP Audit Data		
6.	<i>All identifiable fields collected by the clinical audit</i>	<i>To understand whether the data is fully identifiable or pseudonymised</i>
7.	<i>A link to the NCAPOP project data flow map(s)</i>	<i>To understand data flows and relevant legal bases for different parts of the data journey</i>
Policies and procedures		
8.	<i>Evidence of host organisation:</i> <i>Information governance policy</i> <i>Data protection policy</i>	<i>GDPR requirement to check data processors have appropriate technical and</i>

	• Security policy (links to or copies of)	operational security measures in place to ensure the data is processed legally and safely
9.	Confirmation that the NCAPOP audit provider is compliant with the data security and protection toolkit (DSPT): • Score • Organisation Data Service (ODS) reference • DSPT date published	NHSE requirement, although DSPT not mandatory (i.e. an alternative assurance might be considered)
10.	Confirmation that the NCAPOP audit provider can demonstrate that there is a policy / procedure in place for reporting suspected data breaches (including to HQIP the commissioner)	GDPR requirement
11.	Confirmation that the NCAPOP audit provider can demonstrate that there is a policy / procedure in place for the handling of privacy rights requests	GDPR requirement
12.	Confirmation that the NCAPOP audit provider can demonstrate that staff mandatory annual data protection training is in place	GDPR requirement
Fairness and Transparency		
13.	Evidence of: • Privacy notice • Transparency information for patients (e.g. consent form) (links to or copies of)	GDPR requirement
14.	Confirmation that the NCAPOP audit provider can demonstrate that they are compliant with the national data opt-out (NDOO)	NHSE requirement Allows patients to opt out of their confidential patient information being used for research and planning services.
Accountability		
15.	The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO): • Registration reference number • Expiry date	ICO's requirement for all data processors
16.	The host organisation can demonstrate that they have a named data protection officer in place. To	GDPR requirement

	<i>evidence this we ask for contact details of the NCAPOP audit provider host organisation's data protection officer (DPO)</i>	
17.	<i>Evidence of the NCAPOP project processing register (links to or copies of)</i>	<i>GDPR requirement</i>
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)		
18.	<i>Evidence of the NCAPOP project DPIA (links to or copies of)</i>	<i>GDPR requirement</i>
Third Party Agreements		
19.	<i>Evidence of data sharing agreements in place with other organisations and with whom the NCAPOP audit provider might share data</i>	<i>GDPR requirement</i>
20.	<i>Evidence of NCAPOP audit provider data processing agreements in place with any sub-processors</i>	<i>GDPR requirement</i>

In this way, HQIP, as commissioner and joint data controller with NHSE, can assure the integrity and robustness of the National Clinical Audit and Patient Outcome Programme (NCAPOP) information governance requirements.