

Section 251 CAG

Additional FAQs

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1. Why was Section 251 Confidentiality Advisory Group ("CAG") support sought for the OneLondon SDE?

CAG support, under Section 251 of the National Health Service Act 2006 and its current Regulations, the Health Service (Control of Patient Information) Regulations 2002, for the OneLondon SDE was sought for three main purposes.

Firstly, to support the linkage of NHS England datasets with local patient datasets from London-based health and care organisations registered with the Care Quality Commission ("CQC"). These linked datasets will be made available within the OneLondon SDE for research and non-research purposes. For the flow and linkage of confidential patient information received from NHS England via DARS, NHS England advised the OneLondon Programme to seek Section 251 CAG support.

Secondly, to support the use of the Community Service Data Set ("CSDS") for research purposes, which is not covered by the current Secretary of State directions.

Thirdly and importantly, to cover for the potential remaining risk of re-identification of the de-identified database of the London Analytics Platform ("LAP") due to the richness of the datasets, despite the reasonable precautions taken in terms of technical and organisational measures and will continue to be further developed.



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2. What does the Section 251 CAG support cover? What is its scope?

The Section 251 CAG support covers the flows of confidential patient information from local health and care providers in the London region and national datasets from NHS England (including SUS, MHSDS, ECDS data obtained via DARS) to the London Data Service ("LDS") and LAP, and use of confidential patient information strictly for the purpose of the provision of the OneLondon SDE.

Given that the OneLondon SDE is a multi-purpose platform, the Programme applied to seek support for the use of confidential patient information for both research and non-research purposes.

Hence, the Section 251 CAG approval supports the use of confidential patient information for both the research and non-research purposes in the OneLondon SDE (LAP environment).

The non-research purposes consist of the following:

- Supporting the provision of proactive health care via wide array of population health management programmes;
- The commissioning of health and care services; and
- Assessing and improving health and care services.



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While supporting the delivery of direct care to patients is one of the primary purposes of the programme, this falls outside the scope of CAG's remit under the framework of Section 251 of the National Health Service Act 2006 and its current Regulations, the Health Service (Control of Patient Information Regulations 2002. Therefore, the Section 251 CAG support does not cover the direct care purpose.

If any changes to the current scope of CAG approval is required, an amendment will need to be submitted to CAG for their review and approval.

3. What documentation was submitted to CAG in support of the application?

The following supporting documents have been submitted to CAG:

- IRAS form;
- OneLondon SDE – (Data Protection Impact Assessment) London Data Service v0.5;
- OneLondon SDE – (Data Protection Impact Assessment) Analytics Platform v0.9
- Annex I
- OneLondon SDE – LDS and LAP Data Flow Maps
- OneLondon SDE – Frequently Asked Questions
- NWL ICB ICO Registration Certificate



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- NEL ICB ICO Registration Certificate
- OneLondon SDE – LAP and LDS Information Security Models v0.1
- OneLondon SDE – Public Deliberation and Engagement Reports from 2020-2023
- OneLondon Data Sharing Framework – OneLondon Data Sharing Protocol (ODSP) v1.2
- Patient Information Materials (LAP and LDS Privacy Notices)
- Paper on Pursued Non-Research Purposes
- Complete List of Datasets (OneLondon SDE Data Dictionaries)
- OneLondon SDE – Caldicott Guardian Support Email

The above documents are live documents and were submitted in draft form to support the application, however they have been updated, as appropriate, to reflect on the Section 251 CAG approval and any minor amendments proposed by the members of the LIGSG. All updated documents are available on OneLondon Programme SharePoint for review.

4. What is the timeline of the progress to date and status of the CAG application?

OneLondon SDE Programme submitted the OneLondon SDE Research and Non-Research CAG applications on 21st of November 2025. The applications were considered at the CAG meeting held on 12th of December 2025.



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Following this, CAG provided provisional support for our applications and put forward the following questions requesting further information or specific actions from the programme:

- Please seek further Public Involvement feedback on the use of confidential patient information without consent and provide a summary of this feedback for review. If any changes are made as a result of the feedback received, please ensure that this is made clear in the response.
- Provide further clarification about the local opt-out options available for those who do not want their data to be used research or non-research purposes. These arrangements should not require discussion with a clinician, as opting out will not have any implications for these individuals' care.
- Revise the draft versions of the easy read and child friendly privacy notices to ensure they are suitable and provide the finalised versions for review. As part of the response, please provide rationale on why the revised child-friendly version are child friendly.
- Provide confirmation about the timescales for the completion of the translations of the notification materials.
- Provide further information about the layered approach to informing the cohort and how a broad reach will be achieved.

Recommendation only:

- Consider separating the current FAQs into separate sections for the public, researchers and applicants, for clarity.



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For a full list of the programme's responses to CAG, please see here.

Following the submission of the responses, OneLondon SDE was granted conditional approval from CAG on 4th of February 2025. Conditional Section 251 CAG approval means that CAG has endorsed our applications, subject to compliance with standard and specific conditions of support.

5. What standard conditions does CAG impose for its conditional approval?

Section 251 CAG support to process confidential patient information without consent is subject to certain standard conditions of support. For a full list of standard conditions, please see here.

6. What specific conditions did CAG impose for its conditional approval?

In addition to the standard conditions of support, CAG has imposed conditions specific to the OneLondon SDE research and non-research applications. Please refer to the following table:



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Condition	Status
Provide outputs of further public involvement on the acceptability of using confidential patient information without consent, prior to any information flowing under Section 251 Support.	Completed.
Provide updates copies of the easy-read and child friendly privacy notices, prior to any information flowing under Section 251 Support.	Pending, the OneLondon communications team is progressing this item. External support from easy-read specialists is sought to develop this material.
Copies of the notification materials that will be developed in 2025/26, following patient input, must be provided for review once finalised.	Pending, the OneLondon communications team is progressing this item.
Copies of the interim communications that will be provided to NHS organisations and GPs must be provided for review once finalised.	In progress and pending.



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Condition	Status
Support is for the listed data sources only. An amendment should be submitted to include additional data sources.	N/A
Favourable opinion from a Research Ethics Committee.	Completed.
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.	Completed. The NHS England 23/24 DSPT review for Northwest London ICB and Northeast London ICB was confirmed as 'Standards Met on the NHS England DSPT Tracker.

7. How long is the Section 251 CAG support valid for?

The Section 251 CAG support will remain in place subject to submission of an annual report to the CAG from the date of the final support letter and for the duration of the support.