## welfare attorney/Guardian or Nearest relative information sheet

Version: 4.0, 8 November 2023

Local Lead Investigator: [local\_lead\_investigator\_name]

Chief Investigator: Dr JK Baillie, University of Edinburgh

### Introduction

We are undertaking a research study involving people with severe illness (such as Covid-19, influenza and sepsis).

You are the best person to represent the interests of a patient who may be able to participate in this research, which is why we have approached you. We would ask you to set aside your own views and consider their interests and what you feel would be their wishes and feelings. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for the patient.

Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information and take time to decide. Your decision is completely voluntary. The decision you make will not affect the care or treatment they receive in any way.

### What is the study about?

Infectious diseases and severe injuries affect millions of people around the world every year. Most cases are mild, but some people become very unwell. Our genes (or DNA) determine how vulnerable we are to critical illness. If we could find the genes that cause some people to be more vulnerable, we may be able to develop better treatments for patients in the future.

### WHO WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE STUDY?

GenOMICC is a collaboration of doctors and scientists who are trying to better understand critical illness.

We may also partner with other organisations in future to conduct research.

### What will happen if your friend or relative takes part in this study?

You will be asked to confirm your friend or relative’s participation by signing a consent form. A single blood sample will be taken (4mls; roughly 1 teaspoon) to get a DNA sample. If they are unable to give a blood sample for any reason, a sample of saliva may be taken instead in some circumstances.

### What will happen to the samples?

We will use the blood sample to extract and analyse the patient’s DNA, which could include the whole sequence of their genome. Your genome is your body’s ‘instruction manual’ that contains the information needed to make you, run you and repair you. Your genome is made up of all 3 billion letters of your DNA.

Data from their blood sample, together with their health data, will be looked at by researchers and compared with DNA and health data from the rest of the population, and from others with critical illness from different causes. This will help us to try and find patterns about how diseases affect people and potentially find a cause of the disease factors that affect how mild or severe a disease is.

With your permission, we will store their DNA sample and use it for future ethically approved medical research. Some of this research may make use of facilities in other countries, or those provided by commercial organisations, but their sample will always be under the control of the GenOMICC investigators, or partner organisations, and subject to UK regulations.

### What data is looked at?

GenOMICC investigators and partners will always protect your friend or relative’s data and control who has access to it. Researchers will access the following de-identified (meaning that name, date of birth and other identifying information have been removed) information:

* The patient’s clinical test data
* Electronic copies of all of the patient’s past and future records from the NHS, your GP and other organisations (such as NHS Digital and Public Health bodies)
* Information about any illnesses or stays in hospital – including information that you may not think is related to the patient
* Copies of hospital or clinic records, medical notes, social care, and local or national disease registries, and data from other research studies that you have participated in
* Relevant images from the patient’s NHS records, such as MRI scans, X-rays or photographs
* Data from other research registries and studies that may be relevant

The patient’s original records remain within the NHS. We will include the patient’s data in secure analysis systems. Data taken out of these environments will be restricted to data that cannot be used to re-identify anyone in any way.

The information will only be used for the purpose of healthcare research, or to contact the patient about future opportunities to participate in research. It will not be used to make decisions about future services that might be available, such as insurance.

Where there is a risk that the patient can be identified, their data will only be used in research that has been independently reviewed by an ethics committee and/ or the sponsor.

### Will the PAtient’s data be kept confidential?

Yes. All the information we collect during the course of the research will be kept confidential and there are strict laws which safeguard the privacy of research participants at every stage. Study researchers will need access to the patient’s medical records and data to carry out this research.

To ensure that the study is being run correctly, we will ask your consent for responsible representatives from the Sponsor or NHS Institution to access the patient’s medical records and data collected during the study, where it is relevant to their taking part in this research. The Sponsor is responsible for overall management of the study and providing insurance and indemnity.

### Are there any benefits or disadvantages to taking part in this study?

There is no direct benefit to taking part in the study, but we hope that this study may help other people who become critically ill in future. There is a very small possibility that we will discover information about the patient’s health from their DNA. If this unlikely event happens, we will try to contact their clinical care team to explain the findings and there may be a need for additional tests. This information may be complex and difficult to interpret with certainty, and it may change over time as we discover more about the genome. For this reason the significance of this information would be explained to the patient by doctors or nurses with relevant expertise.

### Will you contact the patient again?

Although we can learn a lot from DNA, we may be able to learn even more from studying the cells in the patient’s blood, or other research. For this reason we might contact them in future about participation in studies related to critical illness. Importantly, by consenting to this first blood sample, you are not automatically consenting to further blood samples. You, or if able the patient themselves, can give consent to a blood sample now, and say no if asked again in the future.

GenOMICC investigators may also contact you directly or through the patient’s clinical care team about other studies that your friend or relative might wish to take part in. These studies may be related to disease or just to biological differences between people. This may be because researchers have already looked at the patient’s health data, or data from the samples they gave, and would like further information based on these findings. You can choose to say yes or no to them taking part in further studies and it will not affect this study or your treatment in any way.

### What will happen if I do not provide consent?

Absolutely nothing. You are free to choose not to consent, and this would not affect the patient’s treatment in any way.

### Can I request that the patient be withdrawn from the study at any point?

Yes, you are free to withdraw the patient from this study at any time without giving reason and without detriment to the patient’s medical care. All samples that we hold from the patient would be destroyed. This applies if you are a parent wanting to withdraw your child, or a relative/consultee wanting to withdraw on behalf of somebody else.

If you decide to withdraw the patient from the study, no new information about the patient will be collected, but information that has already been collected will continue to be used for the study.

A withdrawal form will be required to record this decision. The form can be requested from your healthcare professional or downloaded from the GenOMICC website: [http://genomicc.org/uk/withdrawal](http://genomicc.org/uk/withdrawal/)

### What if I have any problems or would like further information about the study?

If you would like more information about the study you can contact the Local Lead Investigator, [local\_lead\_investigator\_name], or contact the study coordinator, [study\_coordinator\_name] on: [study\_coordinator\_phone\_number] or email [study\_coordinator\_email\_address]

If you would like to discuss this study with someone independent of the study team please contact: David Dorward on: 0131 650 1000 or email: David.dorward@ed.ac.uk

If you wish to make a complaint about the study, please contact: [Enter local patient experience team or complaint contact information / Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) details]

## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Participant Information

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), tailored by the Data Protection Act 2018, will govern the processing (holding or use) of personal data in the UK. You are receiving this as you are currently a participant on this clinical research study. The information below details what data is held about you and who holds or stores this.

The University of Edinburgh and NHS Lothian are the co-sponsors for this study based in the United Kingdom. We will use information from the patient and/or their medical records in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that we are responsible for looking after the patient’s information and using it properly. The co-sponsors will keep identifiable information about the paitent for 5 years after the study has finished.

The patient’s rights to access, change or move their information are limited, as we need to manage the patient’s information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw the patient from the study, we will keep the information about them that we have already obtained. To safeguard their rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible.

### Providing personal data directly e.g. verbally, in a questionnaire or from your care provider

[NHS site name] will keep the person you are consenting on behalf of’s name, their NHS number and their contact details to contact them about the research study, and make sure that relevant information about the study is recorded for the patients care, and to oversee the quality of the study. Individuals from the University of Edinburgh and NHS Lothian and regulatory organisations may look at the patient’s medical and research records to check the accuracy of the research study. [NHS site name] will pass these details to the University of Edinburgh and NHS Lothian along with information collected from the patient and their medical records. The only people in the University of Edinburgh and NHS Lothian who will have access to information that identifies the patient will be people who need to contact the patient about study follow up or audit the data collection process.

[NHS site name] will keep identifiable information about the person you are consenting on behalf of from this study for 5 years after the study has finished.

Providing personal data indirectly e.g. from the patient’s medical records

The University of Edinburgh and NHS Lothian will collect information about the patient for this research study from [NHS site name]. This information will include the patients name/ their NHS number/ their contact details and health information, which is regarded as a special category of information. We will use this information to access the patient’s medical records where applicable and study follow up.

### Use of data for future research

When you agree the person you are consenting on behalf of can take part in a research study, the information about them health and care may be provided to researchers running other research studies in this organisation and in other organisations. These organisations may be universities, NHS organisations or companies involved in health and care research in this country or abroad. Their information will only be used by organisations and researchers to conduct research in accordance with the [UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research**.**](https://www.hra.nhs.uk/planning-and-improving-research/policies-standards-legislation/uk-policy-framework-health-social-care-research/)

The patient’s information could be used for research in any aspect of health or care, and could be combined with information about the patient from other sources held by researchers, the NHS or government. Where this information could identify the person you are consenting on behalf of, the information will be held securely with strict arrangements about who can access the information.

### Contact for further information

You can find out more about how we use the person you are consenting on behalf of’s information and our legal basis for doing so in our Privacy Notice at [www.accord.scot.](http://www.accord.scot/)

For further information on the use of personal data by NHS sites, please link to the Health Research Authority (HRA) website; [https://www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/.](https://www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/)

If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled the patient’s personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter. If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are processing the patient’s personal data in a way that is not lawful you can complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) at [https://ico.org.uk/.](https://ico.org.uk/)

Data Protection Officer contact information:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **University of Edinburgh**Data Protection OfficerGovernance and Strategic PlanningUniversity of EdinburghOld CollegeEdinburghEH8 9YLTel: 0131 651 4114 dpo@ed.ac.uk | **NHS Lothian**Data Protection OfficerNHS LothianWaverley Gate2-4 Waterloo PlaceEdinburghEH1 3EGTel: 0131 465 5444Lothian.DPO@nhs.net  |  |