



National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse

NTA Head Office
6TH Floor
Skipton House
80 London Road
London SE1 6LH

Tel 020 7972 1964
www.nta.nhs.uk

29/07/09

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to draw your attention to the recent release of updated guidance for obtaining client consent for passing information to the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS).

The updated guidance document is available on the NTA website, or from your regional NDTMS team. The document should be used to gain informed consent from a client, either by sharing the information directly (taken from Help Sheet 8 as a minimum) or by including the information in your own guidance as part of a wider locally developed consenting process.

The changes to this document have been made following legal advice about the use of NDTMS data to performance manage the ongoing Treatment Outcomes Profile (TOP) programme. As part of the work plan, the NTA needs to be able to identify to a treatment service that a client has received a TOP at another provider. The following has therefore been added to the 'Information for Clients' on Help Sheet 8.

- *The NDTMS system involves collecting information about the type of treatment you receive from a treatment agency. Sometimes you may be seen by more than one agency. Consequently, to avoid duplication of reporting, NDTMS may share a minimal amount of information about you between the agencies from whom you may have received treatment.*

The above wording would **not** permit the NTA any further disclosure of NDTMS records between providers, and the NTA has no plans to do this.

The planned implementation date for the revised guidance is **1st September 2009**. In order to obtain informed consent to share data with NDTMS, clients that start treatment with a service after this date should be made familiar with the new information.

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It will be assumed that clients that begin treatment before this date will not have provided the revised consent, and we will therefore exclude these records from any reports that would require it. If you have any further questions, please contact Regina Lally, DTMU Manager: regina.lally@sepho.nhs.uk or 01865 334734.

Yours sincerely

Malcolm Roxburgh
NDTMS Programme Manager