

Why we collect information about your cataract surgery and how your information is used

What is the National Ophthalmology Database Audit?

The National Ophthalmology Database Audit (NOD) currently runs the National Cataract Audit. It has been commissioned by the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership and is administered by The Royal College of Ophthalmologists. Cataract surgery is the most frequently undertaken NHS surgical procedure (approximately 400,000) cataract operations undertaken in England per year. The audit is an important quality assurance measure of the most frequently undertaken surgical procedure done in the NHS.

What is Cataract?

Cataracts are a very common eye condition. As people get older the lens inside the eye gradually changes and becomes less transparent (less clear). A lens that has turned misty, or cloudy, is said to have a cataract. Over time a cataract can get worse, gradually making it more and more difficult for those affected to see. An operation can usually remove a misty lens and replace it with an artificial lens to restore clear vision. For more information on cataract surgery, please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cataracts/>.

Why are we carrying out the NOD Audit?

The NOD audit aims to improve the care that patients undergoing cataract surgery receive and to achieve this, information will be collected on how your hospital is providing care to you to help them identify any area that needs improvement.

What information is collected for the cataract audit?

Information can be submitted to the audit by your hospital if you had cataract surgery funded by the NHS in England or Wales. The information collected, as part of your patient record for cataract surgery, and used by NOD includes:

- information on your vision before and after surgery
- cataract surgery outcome (complications of surgery and vision after surgery)

- other medical conditions that affect cataract surgery
- post-operative refraction (the need for glasses)

How is the information used?

The information is analysed and the audit report will help hospitals and surgeons to identify and minimise the risks associated with cataract surgery. Although the risk of cataract surgery is on average quite low, the NOD audit aims to further improve the quality of care and patient outcomes. The report is available to the public and surgeon and centre reports are available on the NOD website, www.nodaudit.org.uk.

No patient identifiable information will be visible in any audit report.

How will your information be kept safe?

There are strict rules about what happens to your NHS data. Information collected is available to a very small number of specially restricted staff on the audit team. They use a secure dedicated computer to analyse the information.

The College and its subcontractors undertake analysis of the data for the purposes of the audit. Anonymized and / or aggregated information may be requested by researchers and information will only be released following approval from the data controller. The Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership is the data controller and has overall authority over the data and all aspects of its use.

Further information

For more information on how your data will be used for the audit, please contact the audit team via:

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