Service Evaluation/Audit permission pathway

This pathway is for researchers and clinicians from any institution who want to conduct a Service Evaluation or Audit using unconsented NHS Grampian data.

Early in your project planning you should contact the following teams to discuss your project and governance requirements:

- **Contact DaSH** to discuss your data, data management requirements and governance arrangements.

- **Contact your Sponsor representative:**

➢ Your Sponsor representative will determine whether your project is classified as research, audit, or service evaluation. The Health Research Authority (HRA) has developed an online tool to help you determine the category your project fits into, but ultimately the final decision rests with your Sponsor. DaSH should be copied into this correspondence so that we can support your applications to the various permission providers if required.

➢ If your project is considered 'Research' by your Sponsor representative, you will need to follow the relevant Permission Pathway here.

➢ If your project is considered to be Service Evaluation or Audit then follow the step-by-step process below.

Step-by-step process

1. Contact the DaSH team to discuss your requirements, who will confirm the correct pathway for your project and consider your data management protocol. To kick things off, submit a Project Initiation Document (PID). This helps us understand your project and assess its feasibility with DaSH.

2. Once we've reviewed your PID and confirmed DaSH can support your project, we'll schedule an initial meeting. This is a chance to discuss project feasibility, permissions, and the next steps. The DaSH team will then be happy to guide you through creating the three key documents you'll need for your application:

- Data Linkage Plan
- Data Specification File (cohort criteria, datasets and variables required for your project)
- Specific Data Management Plan

3. If you haven't already, confirm you have completed Information Governance Training.

4. Register locally with the appropriate team that oversees Service Evaluation and audit projects. This should be done at each institution that is providing data for the service evaluation or audit. At NHS Grampian, this is the Quality Improvement and Assurance Team (QIAT). The application form can be accessed via the NHS Grampian Intranet, or by emailing QIAT.

5. Complete the NHS Grampian Caldicott Guardian (NHSG CG) application form. To obtain the application form, simply email NHSG CG.

6. Ensure you have all required supporting documentation for your application and for DaSH:

- Service Evaluation/Audit registration (QIAT)
- Protocol
- Data Linkage Plan
- Data Specification File
- Specific Data Management Plan
- Evidence of Information Governance Training
- Signed and Dated CVs of researchers

7. The DaSH team can review your application prior to submission.

8. Submit your application and supporting documentation for NHSG CG via email, copying in DaSH.

9. You may receive conditional approval based on changes needing to be made to the application. If so, you will need to revise and resubmit your documentation.

Post-approval

10. Once you have received approval, please contact DaSH with final approval documents.

11. Once DaSH has received your documents, we will assign a Data Analyst to your project and arrange a pre-linkage meeting with the Data Analyst to review your datasets and software needs.

International access approval

Researchers needing access to DaSH from outside the UK will require to complete the "Application for Researcher Access from Outside the UK" form. Contact DaSH to provide you the form and guidance. The application is reviewed internally, then forwarded to the appropriate data controller and data protection team(s). This process applies to researchers from outside the UK, collaborating with international colleagues, or accessing any existing DaSH projects from abroad. We recommend starting this process as early as possible. Approval from all relevant data controllers and data protection teams may take significant time.

Amendments

If **any** changes are to be made to the data required (e.g., changes to cohort, including inclusion or exclusion criteria, date range of datasets, or changes to datasets/additional variables required), or to the research staff working on the project, or to the length of time you require access to the project data in DaSH, , an amendment must be submitted, reviewed and approved by the QIAT team and Caldicott Guardian before any changes can be implemented by DaSH. You should contact DaSH in the first instance to determine feasibility of the amendment and to discuss any extra data requirements that may be needed. DaSH should be cc'd into all amendment correspondence and must receive evidence of the amendment permissions and approved documents. Please not that changes may result in a re-costing of the project due to additional data processing time or an extension to the length of access.

End of Study

Once the project is complete, please notify DaSH so we can initiate the relevant close down procedures.