



Health Research Authority

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10 July 2025

Joanna Barry - Insight Support Manager
Insight & Voice Team, People and Communities, Nursing Directorate
NHS England
Wellington House
133-135 Waterloo Road
London
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Dear Joanna Barry,

Application title: National Cancer Patient Experience Survey 2025 – 2029
CAG reference: 25/CAG/0070

Thank you for submitting a **non-research** application under Regulation 5 of the Health Service (Control of Patient Information) Regulations 2002 ('section 251 support') to process confidential patient information without consent.

This application was considered at the precedent set Confidentiality Advisory Group (CAG) meeting held on 13 June 2025 under category 11: Applications to administer patient surveys made by organisations on behalf of Care Quality Commission (CQC). This outcome should be read in conjunction the [minutes](#) of this meeting.

Confidentiality Advisory Group advice and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care decision

The CAG agreed that the minimum criteria under the Regulations appeared to have been met, and therefore advised recommending support to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, having considered the advice from the Confidentiality Advisory Group as set out in the minutes, has determined the following:

- **The application is Conditionally supported, subject to compliance with the standard and specific conditions of support.**

Please note that the legal basis to allow access to the specified confidential patient information without consent is now in effect. A summary of the scope of support is provided in Appendix A.

Support provides a lawful basis to allow the information to be processed by the relevant parties for the specified purposes without incurring a breach of the common law duty of confidence only. Applicants must ensure the activity remains fully compliant with all other relevant legislation.

Specific conditions of support

1. The CAG request for the following changes below to the patient notification materials and provide updated versions in 1 month:
 - a) The date on the poster to allow objections needs to be amended to allow 4 weeks from poster display before data transfer
 - b) Ensure it is clear that the secretary of state for health and social care provided support on advice from CAG

Make the following changes to the first covering letter:

- c) P2 refers to National Data Guardian opt-out. Remove the term 'guardian'.
 - d) Use the specific reference from the poster to the NDOO exemptions webpage
2. 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. **Confirmed:**

The NHS England 23/24 DSPT reviews for **Picker Institute Europe & Greens Ltd** were confirmed as 'Standards Met' on the NHS England DSPT Tracker

This letter provides confirmation of final support, and all the above conditions are expected to be met within the stated timeframe. I will arrange for the register of approved applications on the HRA website to be updated with this information.

Maintaining CAG support: Reporting requirements

Please note the following guidance on reporting requirements in order to maintain CAG support for the duration of the activity.

- **Annual review report:** It is your responsibility to submit an annual review report every 12 months for the entire duration that confidential patient information is being processed without consent. The next annual review should be provided no later than **10 July 2026** and preferably 4 weeks before this date. Further guidance and the annual review form is available on the [IRAS website](#).
- **Notifying amendments to the scope of CAG support:** Guidance on submitting CAG amendments and the amendment form is available on the [IRAS website](#).
- **Notifying the end of activity:** Guidance on notifying the end of activity and the end closure report form is available on [the IRAS website](#).
- **Register of supported applications:** It is a statutory requirement to publish all supported applications to process confidential patient information without consent. Supported applications are published on the [HRA website](#).

Approved documents

The list of documents reviewed and approved at the meeting are as follows.

<i>Document</i>	<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>
CAG application from (signed/authorised) [NCPES 25-29_CAG-section-251-form-non-research-applications-Picker]		
Confidentiality policy [17. Picker Confidentiality Policy - June 2017]		
Data Protection Registration [20. Picker DPO Registration Certificate - Z4942556]		
Other [11. NCPES 25-29 - Data Processor Agreement - Picker and NHSE]		
Other [12. NCPES 25-29 - NHS England DP Assurance Checklist for Picker]		
Other [13. NCPES 25-29 - NHS England DPIA]		
Other [14. NHS England - Data Protection Policy]		
Other [15. NHS England - Information Governance Policy]		
Other [16. Picker - Information Security and Privacy Information Policy - January 2025]		
Other [18. Picker Contract Confidentiality Wording May 2025]		
Other [19. Picker Data Protection and Processing Policy - External Version]		
Other [21. Picker Equipment Policy - January 2025]		
Other [22. Picker Information Governance - Sharing of PID]		
Other [23. Picker ISO 27001 Certificate to 06052026]		
Other [24. Picker ISO MS Part 1]		
Other [25. Picker ISO MS Part 2 ISO 20252]		
Other [26. Picker ISO20252 2023 Certificate to 19032026]		
Other [27. Picker Supplier Relationship Policy]		
Other [02. NCPES 2025_First covering letter]		
Other [03. NCPES 2025_Second covering letter]		
Other [04. NCPES 2025_Third covering letter]		
Other [05. NCPES 2025_Accessibility sheet]		
Other [06. NCPES 25-29_Data flow diagram]		
Other [09. NCPES 2025_Survey handbook]		
Other [10. NCPES 25_Sampling Instructions]		
Patient Information Materials [01. NCPES 2025_Questionnaire]		
Patient Information Materials [08. NCPES 2025_Dissent poster]		
Write recommendation from Caldicott Guardian (or equivalent) of applicant's organisation [07. NCPES 25-29_Caldicott Guardian Letter]		

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries following this letter. I would be grateful if you could quote the above reference number in all future correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Wangari Njiiri
Approvals Administrator

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Email: cag@hra.nhs.uk

Included:

List of members who considered application
Summary of scope of support

Confidentiality Advisory Group sub-committee meeting 13 June 2025

Members present:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>
Ms Clare Sanderson	CAG Alternate Vice Chair
Dr Sanda Duggan	CAG Member (Lay)
Mr Umar Sabat	CAG Member (Expert)

Also in attendance:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>
Ms Caroline Watchurst	Approvals Confidentiality Advisor
Ms Wangari Njiiri	HRA Approvals Administrator

Appendix A – Summary of Scope of Support

Summary of application

This application from Picker Institute Europe on behalf of NHS England is for the non-research purpose of management of health and social care to administer the National Cancer Patient Experience Survey (CPES) 2025 – 2029. This will enable comparisons between Trusts, for commissioners, providers and patients (all of whom can access the published results), allow for monitoring of improvements in services, drive further improvements, and provide NHS England with an up to date overview of cancer patient experience across England.

The 2025-2029 survey will replicate the methodology used in previous iterations of the survey. Picker Institute Europe works with Greens Limited to mail initial questionnaires and then reminders (as required) to eligible participants following the above checks using name and address. The survey will be conducted by post, with two reminders (to non-responders only) as is the case with other national patient surveys. A standard questionnaire, covering letter and up to two reminder letters will be used. Patients will also be sent a link to complete the survey online should they prefer to do so. Patient participation then proceeds on a consented basis

A recommendation for class 1, 5 and 6 support was requested to cover access to the relevant unconsented activities as described in the application.

Confidential patient information requested

The following sets out a summary of the specified cohort, listed data sources and key identifiers. Where applicable, full datasets and data flows are provided in the application form and relevant supporting documentation as this letter represents only a summary of the full detail.

Cohort	All adult patients (aged 16 and over), with a primary diagnosis of cancer, who have been admitted to hospital as inpatients for cancer related treatment, or who were seen as day case patients for cancer related treatment, and have been discharged between 1st April and 30th June of each survey year (for example the 2025 survey will include those discharged between 1st April 2025 and 30th June 2025). Each year approximately 135,500 cancer patients are invited to take part in NCPES
Data sources	Electronic patient records at participating Trusts in England
Identifiers required by Picker from Trusts	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Name2. Address inc postcode3. telephone number4. email address5. NHS number6. date of birth Non CPI: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sex2. ethnic group3. admission and discharge dates4. admission type

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. ICD10 or ICD11 code 6. speciality code 7. referring ICB and site
Identifiers required for purpose of sending invitation letters (Picker to greens)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Names 2. Addresses 3. Unique identifier
Identifiers required for analysis purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Postcode – (modified for analysis) 2. Anonymised reference number for each record (applied by Trust) 3. ICD10 code 4. ICD11 code 5. Speciality code 6. Ethnic group 7. Age 8. Self-reported sex (from questionnaire response) 9. Self-reported gender (from questionnaire response)