**Your confidential information**

We take our responsibility for looking after care information very seriously; confidentiality underpins our study method and we take every step to keep all data confidential in line with legal rules and practice. Because we are researching the health outcomes for people who have suffered from stroke or other vascular events, we are very keen to find out what happens to all of the study participants. For this reason, unless we are asked not to, we register all participants in the Oxford Vascular study with NHS Digital. This allows us to find out if study participants have been admitted to hospital or passed away, without us contacting the family and causing undue distress to relatives. This information includes date and cause of death information supplied by NHS Digital on behalf of the Office for National Statistics and is sourced from civil registration data. We provide identifiable data (name, date of birth and NHS number) to NHS Digital. The NHS Digital then provides us with date of birth, sex, postcode, and NHS number together with the participants unique study identifier and cause and date of death. In addition, NHS Digital has a record of all hospital admissions from the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) dataset and which they can link to individual participants in the study. NHS Digital also follows a strict assurance system to make sure care information is looked after in line with good practice and the law. [More information.](http://content.digital.nhs.uk/article/4979/Assuring-information)

**How do we store and use this information?**

The information we received from NHS Digital will be imported to a securely accessed folder by The University of Oxford (Data Controller), and used solely for academic research purposes by the OxVasc study team. Importantly, whilst the information received is specific to each study participant, no individual person will be identifiable in any publication arising from this work. Anonymous results of the study may be made available to collaborators with the appropriate agreements/approvals.

**What to do next?**

If study participants decide they no longer want their study data to be linked in this way they can withdraw from this follow-up, without affecting their current medical care in any way, by contacting Dr Louise Silver at:

Dr Louise Silver

Research Coordinator

Centre for Prevention of Stroke and Dementia

University of Oxford

Level 6, West Wing

John Radcliffe Hospital

Headley Way

Oxford

OX3 9DU

Tel: 01865 234622

**Email**: louise.silver@ndcn.ox.ac.uk

or **Tel:** +44 (0)1865 231601 between 9-4pm on weekdays.