

PenCS Data – Frequently Asked Questions

How does the de-identified data extraction work?

A de-identified data file can be created using the 'de-identify dataset' tool in CAT4. This is the only data file that can be exported and taken off-site. What the de-identification process does, is remove patient identifiers including name, date of birth, address and replace it with a Statistical Linkage Key (SLK). The SLK is created when the extract is collected at the practice level and is encrypted before uploaded to PAT CAT*. Once de-identified, a patient's SLK is not re-traceable. The SLK system is also used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that enables two or more records belonging to the same individual to be brought together.

More information on CAT4 data de-identification can be found here on the [PenCS Website](#)

* PAT CAT is a web based solution that aggregates de-identified General Practice data and displays the information through a comprehensive collection of graphs, charts and reports.

Who owns the data?

Pen CS (software company) does not hold or own patient data. Pen CS provides the tools that allow organisations to work with their data. In the QI program, data is held or owned by:

- the General Practice or Health Service in an identifiable format for analysis and reporting which supports activities such as accreditation and quality improvement;
- the Primary Health Network (PHN), in agreement with the Practice, in a de-identifiable format which supports population health and service delivery planning.
- Pen CS Data Governance Policy – available upon request.

What will SNHN do with my practice's data?

SNHN abides by its policies including SNHN Information Privacy Policy and SNHN Population Health Analysis Policy. These policies outline how the data can be used:

- to assist SNHN and its employees to fulfil its duty which includes the making of data reports
- to provide information to SNHN health gap analysis in the region
- to comply with SNHN corporate reporting requirements

SNHN Information Privacy Policy can be found on the [website](#), <https://sydneynorthhealthnetwork.org.au/privacy-policy/>

Will the data be shared with a third body?

- SNHN will not provide your data to third parties with commercial interests
- SNHN will not publish information with practice names or provider names without written consent.