

SUBJECT LINE: We are asking your GP for help

Dear [Participant]

Through the generous donation of your time and health data, you have already helped to have a huge impact on our understanding of causes, diagnoses and treatments of disease. Over 9,000 scientific papers have been published using the data that you have contributed to since this project began. This has led to new strategies for preventing and treating cancers, heart attacks and strokes, (as well as several other conditions) and, with your continuing help, we expect many more discoveries to come.

For many years, UK Biobank has successfully received updates from the NHS if participants undergo treatment in hospital, are diagnosed with cancer, or access other central NHS services. These data complement the information you have provided via questionnaires and your visits to our clinics, and allows us to follow the health of participants over time. However, until now, we have been unable to routinely receive important updates of health information held by the majority of GP practices – this is despite you giving us your permission when you first joined UK Biobank.

The health information held by your GP practice would provide many further pieces of the puzzle of disease diagnosis, development and treatment, and enable your generosity to have even more of an impact. To remedy this, your GP practice will have received a joint letter from UK Biobank, the Royal College of General Practitioners and NHS England, asking them to share the relevant data with us.

We recognise that GPs are already extremely busy, so we have ensured that sharing your data will require a straightforward administrative task that can be completed in less than a minute. The relevant data – which only includes coded health data and no written notes - will be transferred securely to UK Biobank using proven systems, appropriately de-identified as we do with all health information, and then added to UK Biobank's research resource to be made available to researchers around the world for health research that is in the public interest.

There is nothing that you need do, though it is possible that your GP practice may contact you to check that you are a UK Biobank participant.

Thank you for your continuing support and important contribution as a participant in UK Biobank. You are helping to improve the understanding of disease for current and future generations.

As always, if you have any questions, please do feel free to contact us by calling free of charge on 0800 0 276 276 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) or by sending an email to ukbiobank@ukbiobank.ac.uk

Kindest regards,

Prof Sir Rory Collins