

How can I be sure that the audits are properly carried out?

The audits are supervised by the National Office of Clinical Audit (NOCA).

What is the National Office of Clinical Audit (NOCA)?

NOCA was established in 2012 to create sustainable clinical audit programmes at national level.

National clinical audit is an ongoing review of clinical practice measuring structures, processes and outcomes to make improvements. NOCA supports hospitals to learn from their audit information.

NOCA is funded by the Health Service Executive Quality Improvement Division and supported by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

How can I be sure that my information is kept confidential?

Staff are trained on how to handle your information, so that it is kept confidential and safe from unauthorised access or loss.

How does NOCA keep my information confidential?

It is our duty to keep your information confidential. We will do this by ensuring that:

- our staff know their responsibilities and are trained in handling information;
- information is kept on secure computer systems;
- we comply with all regulations relating to confidentiality and protection of data;
- it is only seen by authorised people.

Where can I access my information?

You can ask for a copy of your information from your hospital. You can discuss this with a member of staff in the ICU. NOCA cannot identify individual patients from the information we receive.



National Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Audit

Patient Information

Your questions answered

You can contact the National Office of Clinical Audit at:

2nd Floor, Ardilaun House, Block B,
111 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2.
Telephone: 00 (353) 1 402 8577
Email: auditinfo@noca.ie
Website: www.noca.ie

What is an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Audit?

An ICU Audit is a check of the quality of care we provide to patients in the Intensive Care Unit. We do this to make sure that the Unit is performing well and to improve patient safety.

How is audit done?

The hospital's ICU Audit Nurses conduct the audit with help from the doctors and nurses working in the Unit.

They collect patients' information relating to their stay in ICU from the hospital records. This includes information on:

- when you were admitted to ICU,
- where you were admitted from,
- why you needed ICU care,
- the treatment you were given, and
- the outcome of this treatment, including any complications.

The audit involves checking that everything is done correctly. If the initial results suggest that care was not provided in the right way to patients, the team working in the Unit must put a plan in place to improve care. After this another check is done to see if things have improved and that patients are receiving the right care, in the right way.

What is done with the information collected?

The hospital keeps the information on a secure database. They report on it to management and staff in the hospital every three months. This helps them to understand how well the Unit is working and where improvements are needed.

Audit information is also sent to an independent organisation in London, the Intensive Care National Audit & Research Centre (also called ICNARC). There it is compared with audit findings from ICU units in hospitals throughout Ireland and the UK. ICNARC send a report of their findings back to the hospital and to National Office of Clinical Audit (NOCA).

Before Audit information is sent outside the hospital, detail that would identify you as a patient such as your name, address and hospital number is removed. This complies with Data Protection legislation.

Health care research can also improve care. In the future, NOCA may grant health care researchers access to your data. This will only happen when researchers submit a proposal to a research ethics committee for review. This ensures that health care research using information from this audit is of a high standard and may contribute to improved care for patients.

What will happen to my information?

Results are used to make changes and improvements in the ICU care provided to you and all health service users. All individual findings will be combined and published in an annual report on the quality of care in Irish ICUs. This will be available on the NOCA website. No individuals are identified in these reports.

Is my personal information used?

No. Your personal information – that is information which could identify you, such as your name, address and date of birth – is not collected in this audit. This information remains in the hospital which you attended. This means that we use anonymous information from your records for this audit.

When we use anonymous information for clinical audit or for research, it is not linked to you. Therefore, we will not contact you to use this information. This complies with Data Protection legislation.