



**Thames Valley  
& Surrey**

SECURE DATA  
ENVIRONMENT

Part of the  
**NHS Research Secure Data  
Environment Network**

# TVS SDE Overview for General Practices

## What is the Thames Valley & Surrey (TVS) Secure Data Environment (SDE)?



Hosted by Oxford University Hospitals NHS FT, TVS SDE is designed to integrate and analyse routinely collected health and social care data within a secure NHS environment, supporting research and innovation while safeguarding patient privacy and maintaining public trust.



Thames Valley & Surrey encompasses data from adults and children across three Integrated Care Systems (BOB, Frimley, Surrey Heartlands) and additional acute trusts (Great Western Hospital & Milton Keynes), serving approximately 4.3 million people.



The data includes multiple modalities such as imaging, pathology, genomics, and structured records. In General Practice, it is specifically only the structured (coded) data that is included.



NHS, academic, and healthcare industry research projects can request access to the data, with benefits and income shared among the contributing organisations.

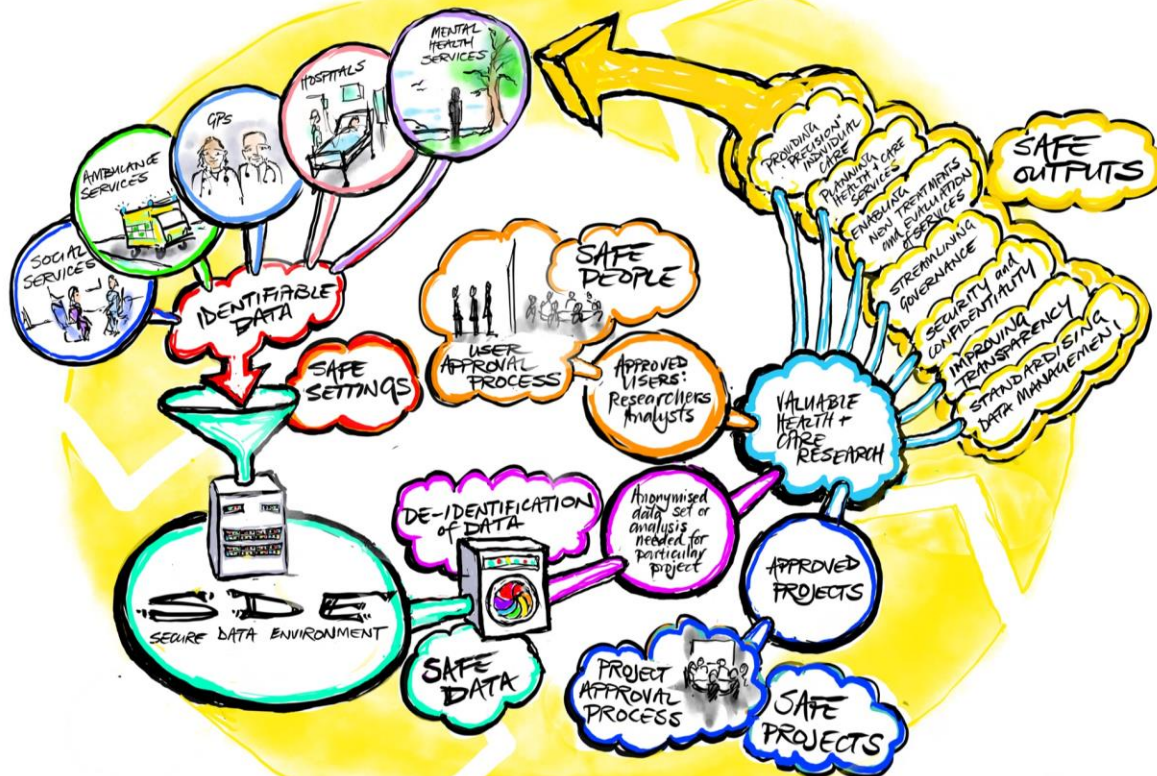
# Benefits of the TVS SDE



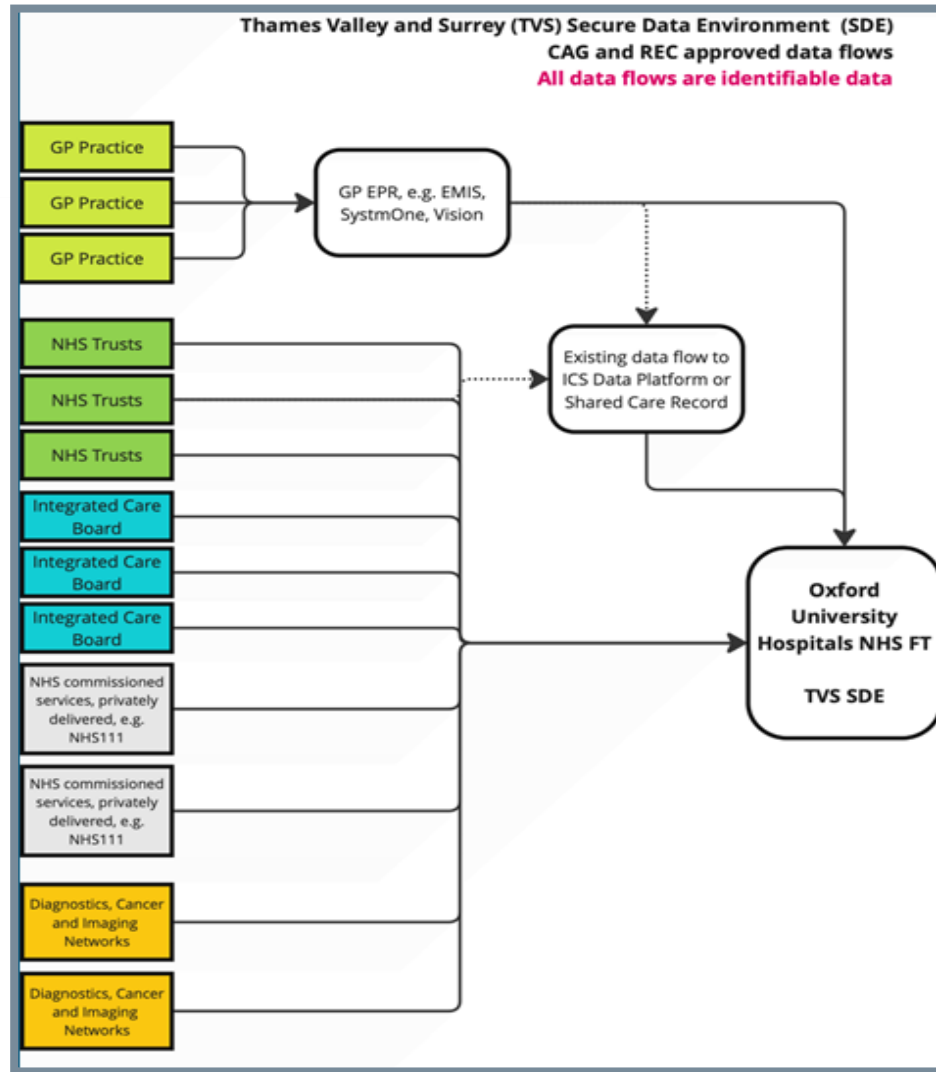
For GPs, the SDE enables structured (coded) GP data, excluding free text, to be used for approved research securely and legally, with no extra workload or cost, strong patient privacy protections, clear national approvals, public-led governance, and benefits for improving care and outcomes across the NHS.



For patients, the SDE means their health data can be used safely and transparently to improve care, treatments and services, while remaining under NHS control: data is analysed inside a secure NHS-run system rather than being shared externally.



- Coded data flows from GP systems via the TVS Care Records Programme, minimising cost and risk for practices.
- Data is identifiable only for linkage within the SDE, then de-identified before researcher access.
- The NHS and local opt-outs are available for patients, and applied to all data extracts before researchers have access.
- Strict controls and review processes govern data access and project findings.



# Governance & Legal Basis



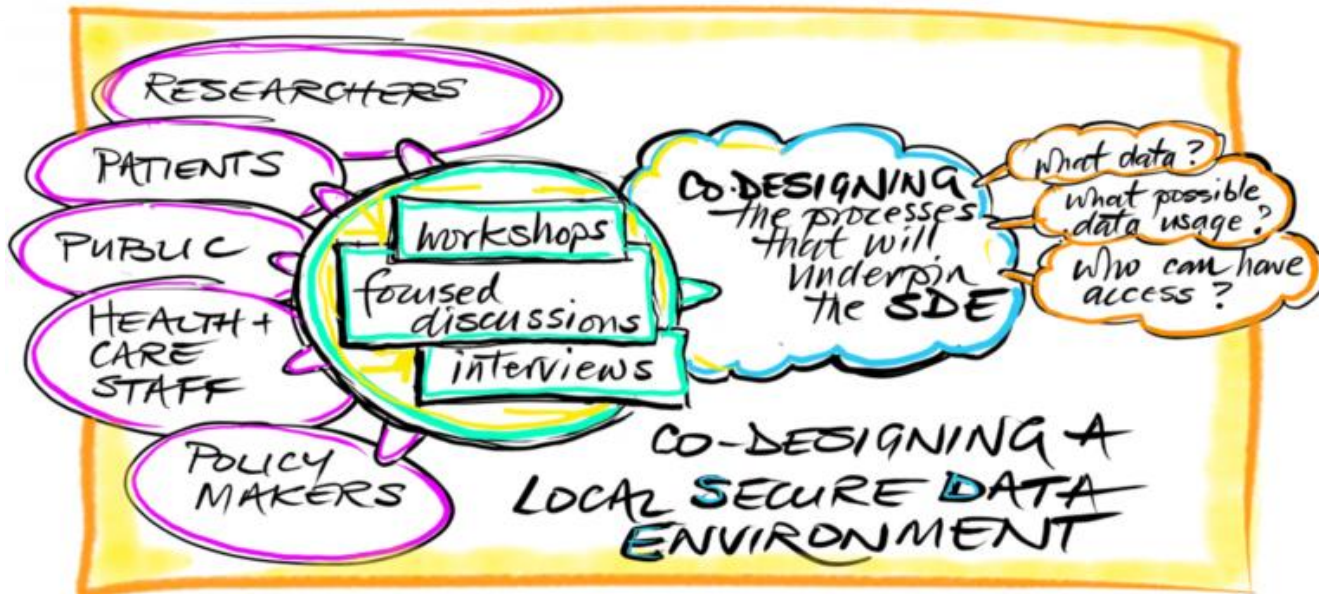
The Health Research Authority (HRA) has given Section 251 support, following advice from their Confidentiality Advisory Group (CAG), for the development of the Thames Valley and Surrey Secure Data Environment (CAG reference: 23/CAG/0046). This provides the legal basis to allow access to the specified confidential patient information without asking for consent.



The SDE complies with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, with robust governance structures and public representation in decision-making committees



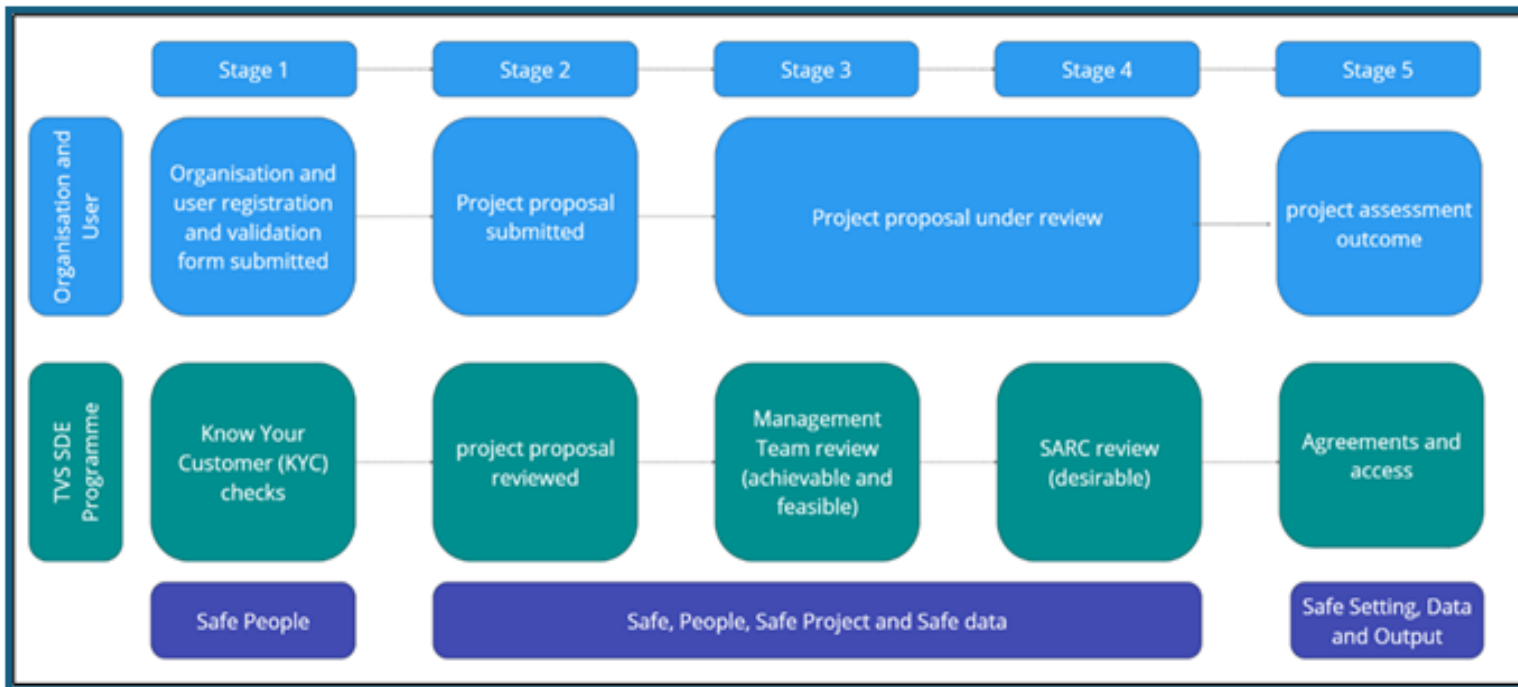
We have ethical approval from South Central – Oxford C Research Ethics Committees (REC) for a research database (REC reference: 22/SC/0330)



The public are involved through coproduction, with patients, members of the public and staff helping to design, govern and oversee the SDE from the start.

To date this has included nine co-production workshops, and a Community of Practice of over 150 members, plus over 30% public representation on the committee that approves data access.

## Strict controls and review processes govern data access



# Risks, controls and indemnity

| Risk  | Controls  | Risk Rating |
|---|---|-------------|
| <b>Data Breach</b>                              | TVS SDE is operated within OUH data centres, meeting Data Security Protection Toolkit (DSPT) standards. Undergoing ISO 27001 and DHSC accreditation. Secure data transfer mechanisms and independent penetration testing are in place.                            | Low         |
| <b>Increased workload from public enquiries</b> | Comprehensive patient information is available on the TVS SDE website. Practices receive notification materials and support for queries. Programme provides responses for related enquiries.  | Low         |
| <b>Financial risk</b>                           | ICB has broadened the liability indemnity coverage provided for the Shared Care Record for the onwards TVS SDE data flow  | Low         |
| <b>Re-identification of patients</b>            | Automated data extraction and transformation processes reduce human error and risk of re-identification. Fresh identifiers and date/time shifting are applied. Users contractually prohibited from attempting re-identification.                                  | Not rated   |
| <b>Patient trust in data use</b>                | Extensive public engagement and coproduction, application of the Five Safes framework, >30% public membership on the approvals committee, The NHS and local opt-outs are available for patients, and applied to all data extracts before researchers have access. | Medium      |
| <b>Impact on existing GP research projects</b>  | TVS SDE is non-exclusive; practices can continue other research activities and use SDE to enhance future research.  | Low         |

# Participation Steps for Practices

- 1. Review and sign the TVS SDE Provider Terms.
- 2. Agree a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA).
- 3. Notify patients using provided materials.