

## **KEY POINTS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT AUTONOMY AND CONSENT**

### **AUTONOMY**

- Autonomy is a core ethical value in medical and research ethics. It concerns the interest of individuals in determining what happens to them and information about them.
- Autonomy is the ethical principle which underpins the need to obtain consent.

### **CONSENT**

- Obtaining consent to use patient data for secondary purposes is important because it enables self-determination in respect of personal information.
- If consent exists for a proposed data use, then such use of the data will be ethically sound.

### **LEGALLY VALID CONSENT**

- Competent- the individual must be legally competent.
- Voluntary- the individual must not have been subject to undue influence or coercion.
- Informed- the individual should be fully informed as to what they are consenting to. They should be given information about the nature, purpose and scope of the proposed secondary data use.

### **PROCEEDING WITHOUT CONSENT?**

- If it is not possible or practicable to obtain consent you may still be able to proceed with your proposed data use if the data is anonymised and/or the relevant authorisation has been obtained.
- In order to obtain the necessary authorisation you will need to be able to demonstrate that there is a sufficient public interest in the research to outweigh any concerns over autonomy and confidentiality.