Virtual Patient Privacy Notice

You should read this… it is not just typical blah blah blah

This virtual patient presents a simulation of clinical interactions between healthcare students and patients. It is not based on real patients and no real patient data is involved.

Factual accuracy

Responses to your questions are generated by a large language model. Whilst the large language model has previously demonstrated excellent performance on medical knowledge tests, it may not always be factually correct in the responses which it gives. If a response to a question doesn't seem correct you should check against a trusted knowledge source. If the system gives responses which seem dangerous or very incorrect, please contact administrators and supply a copy of the conversation transcript.

Unprofessional, abusive or illegal behaviour

Please be aware that you must not exhibit unprofessional, abusive or illegal behaviour whilst interacting with the virtual patient app. System administrators will intermittently search for any such behaviours and reserve the right to take appropriate action with regards to any unprofessional behaviour which is discovered.

How your personal data will be used

The system collects personal data from you in order to create an account: your name, institution, course, year student number and email address. It may collect additional information about the group you are in. In due course the system will (optionally) collect demographic data.

These data are used to select appropriate patient cases for you and to organise your conversations so that your dashboard collates the cases you have seen.

In due course, demographic data will be used to examine whether there are any issues in terms of bias or fairness in the system.

How your conversation data will be used:

When you chat to the virtual patient, the questions you ask and any recommendations or explanations you give (conversation data) are sent to a 3rd party provider of large language models (i.e. an AI system) through a secure interface. Currently this service is provided by OpenAI, but this could change if system requirements evolve. The data you send is not visible to anyone outside of Keele or OpenAI. OpenAI temporarily store and monitor data to fulfil legal duties (avoiding sexual abuse, terrorism etc) and provide

technical support. Their privacy policy as of 5/3/2026 states that by default they do not use the data entered through this interface to train their models: https://openai.com/enterprise-privacy/

Where your data are stored:

Your personal data and conversation data are handled by a 3rd party webserver company called Render (https://render.com/) and stored on a database within Render's servers. The virtual patient app has been designed with excellent security in mind, but we cannot completely exclude the possibility that your personal or conversation data could be maliciously accessed by additional third parties if a security breach were to occur.

How Keele will use your data:

Keele University School of Medicine are keen to learn about how virtual patients can be optimised to most effectively aid students' learning. For this reason we will access your data for research and evaluation purposes to understand more about how students use and interact with the system. We may experiment with different configurations of the system and compare their influence. If supplied, we will use demographic data to explore fairness or bias within the system. We may look at meta-data (use patterns), scores, conversation text, feedback and demographics. All of these analyses will use pseudonymous data (i.e. all identifiers have been removed) and we will never identify individual students in the outputs of such analyses unless we have sought their explicit consent to do so. Data will be processed for a mixture of internal evaluation, system improvement and scientific research.

We may additionally enable your data to be accessed by tutors and academics from Keele in an identifiable form in order to understand your development and support your learning.