Who benefits from this audit?
The reports are available to parents, clinical staff and health care managers. Your hospital will receive reports about the quality of care they provide compared to other hospitals. They will also receive guidance about how their care can be improved. As a result, babies stand to benefit from the improvements in care that come from the audit.

How can I find out more?
Please visit:
The National Neonatal Audit Programme web page on the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health website at: www.rcpch.ac.uk/nnap and the Neonatal Data Analysis Unit website at: www.imperial.ac.uk/ndau
The National Neonatal Audit Programme is a national project funded by the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) and supported by the Department of Health and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

What is clinical audit?
Clinical audit is the means by which health professionals ensure they are continually measuring and improving their work. They do this by comparing their work against specific standards. Changes can then be made to improve patient care.

What is the National Neonatal Audit Programme about?
The purpose is to assess whether babies receive consistent, high quality care in neonatal units throughout the country. The audit assesses if babies receive certain health checks that support them to live healthy lives and reduce complications, identify differences in care and outcomes with similar NHS organisations, identify good practice and share this with other neonatal units, and check that national guidelines are being followed.

What information is used?
We use information that is needed and collected as part of routine care. The information is used by the staff caring for your baby every day in the same way that paper medical records are used. Information is not collected specially for this audit. The information includes details of the time and place of birth, the length of gestation, weight, and details of treatment received. We use your child’s NHS number, and not their name. By using this unique number we are able to track the care your child receives without knowing their personal details. This allows us to follow someone’s care wherever they are treated. No analyses or reports contain NHS numbers or any other information that can be used to identify anyone.

Who collects the information?
The information is collected by the regular staff on the neonatal unit.

When is information collected?
The information is updated regularly throughout your baby’s stay in the neonatal unit.

What happens to the information collected?
The information is used to create a “National Neonatal Research Database” (NNRD). The information within the NNRD is called the “National Neonatal Dataset”. This information is used to produce audit reports and also to support research, surveys and management reports aiming to improve newborn care and health outcomes. Any use of this information for research requires approval from a National Research Ethics Committee. No details that might identify you or your baby would be revealed. The NNRD is created and held at the Neonatal Data Analysis Unit where the information for the National Neonatal Audit Programme is analysed.

How do we keep your child’s information safe?
Neonatal Unit staff enter the information electronically using a password protected system (known as the Badger System). This system for NHS data is completely secure and uses the NHS net which is separate from the internet. The information is released to the Neonatal Data Analysis Unit where the National Neonatal Research Database is created. The information collected and its use is subject to strict rules of confidentiality as laid down by Acts of Parliament, including the Data Protection Act 1998 and the NHS Act 2006.

The Neonatal Data Analysis Unit has been given permission to use and store the information in accordance with these strict regulations. In order to draw reliable conclusions from audit and research it is important that information is included on every baby treated within each neonatal unit. The National Neonatal Research Database is most effective when it contains information from as many patients as possible but if you do not want your child’s information to be used, please tell the neonatal unit staff where your baby is being cared for. They will make sure your child’s information is not sent to the Neonatal Data Analysis Unit and not included in the National Neonatal Research Database. This will not affect your baby’s care in any way.