



ONLINE ACCESS TO RECORDS FAQs & INFORMATION LEAFLET

Why do I need to complete a separate form if I want access to my records online?

GP Practices must ensure that your record is reviewed before access is granted, as there may be sensitive information that requires redacting. This is covered further in the answer to the next question.

I can see the date of an entry in my records but I can't see any detail of it. Why is this?

When a patient has online access to their records, the GP Practice has to ensure that the record is reviewed to assess if any documents or consultations need to be restricted from online viewing. This may be for one of several reasons:

- It contains third-party information
- The information may cause harm to the patient if viewed e.g. it may be sensitive
- In the case of documents arriving from third-parties (e.g. hospitals) it is often restricted from online visibility until it has been reviewed by a clinician, at which point it is either approved for online viewing or the restriction remains
- Access to view what we call "free text" (such as comments and any discussions that took place during an appointment) has not been activated by the Practice. This is often in relation to bullet point 2 above.

I don't want to be able to see my records online. Can it be turned off for me?

Yes - please contact us.

I don't understand the terminology used in my record. Can records not be written for the patients understanding?

Patient medical records are written with the view of being read by other qualified medical professionals, and therefore further explanation on wording is not generally warranted as the terms are understood and recognised by the medical profession. As such, the phrasing of notes in patient records will not be altered for this purpose. However, if you are not sure of the details within your record please contact us for clarification.

I've seen something in my record that I don't agree with and I'd like it removing

If you have seen an entry in your record that you believe is incorrect, please contact us so we can look into it. Please be aware that we cannot remove factually correct information, for example if you have disclosed your smoking status. If, on review, the information is found to be correct, we can add that you dispute the entry however we are unable to remove it. More information on this can be found at www.ico.org.uk and search "Right to Rectification"

I'm concerned my online account security has been compromised

By having online access to your medical records, you agree to be responsible for the security of the information that you see or download. If you choose to share your information with anyone else, this is at your own risk. However if you suspect that your account has been accessed without your permission (or unlawfully), please contact us.

If you see information that is not about you or is incorrect, you must contact the Practice.

Before you apply for online access to your record, there are some other things to consider. Although the chances of any of these things happening are very small, you will be asked that you have read and understood the following before you are given login details.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Forgotten history

There may be something you have forgotten about in your record that you might find upsetting.

Abnormal results or bad news

If your GP has given you access to test results or letters, you may see something that you find upsetting to you. This may occur before you have spoken to your doctor or while the surgery is closed and you cannot contact them.

Choosing to share your information with someone

It's up to you whether or not you share your information with others – perhaps family members or carers. It's your choice, but also your responsibility to keep the information safe and secure.

Coercion

If you think you may be pressured into revealing details from your patient record to someone else against your will, it is best that you do not register for access at this time.

Misunderstood information

Your medical record is designed to be used by clinical professionals to ensure that you receive the best possible care. Some of the information within your medical record may be highly technical, written by specialists and not easily understood. If you require further clarification, please contact the surgery for a clearer explanation.

Information about someone else

If you spot something in the record that is not about you or notice any other errors, please log out of the system immediately and contact the practice as soon as possible.

It will be your responsibility to keep your login details and password safe and secure. If you know or suspect that your record has been accessed by someone that you have not agreed should see it, then you should change your password immediately.

If you can't do this for some reason, we recommend that you contact the practice so that we can remove online access until you are able to reset your password.

If you print out any information from your record, it is also your responsibility to keep this secure. If you are at all worried about keeping printed copies safe, we recommend that you do not make copies at all.