

DISCLOSURE OF PATIENT RECORDS

There may be circumstances in which your personal medical record or parts of it may be disclosed to other people, apart from your GP and practice staff.

Usually, they would be disclosed in an anonymised form. However, there are times when the record cannot be anonymised, either because it would be impractical to do so or because the nature of the request is such that it is necessary for your name to be disclosed.

Patients should be re-assured that any disclosure of patient information is conducted within the rules of the Data Protection Act and records will only be disclosed when the following conditions are met:

1. The purpose of the request is to improve, manage or promote the provision of healthcare. Examples of this may be
 - Where the relevant Primary Care Trust wishes to ensure that the GP practice is meeting its obligation to provide certain levels of care to patients or a particular group of patients under the terms of their contract.
 - Where a new treatment is available, and where the PCT wishes to inform patients who would benefit from it, the practice would provide name and contact information.
2. Any other valid exemption under the Data Protection Act applies.
3. Disclosure will only be made in response to appropriate requests made by the relevant Primary Care Trust or people acting on their behalf, provided those people are themselves bound legally to keep the information they receive confidential.

Patients' Rights

If you want to obtain further information on the exact nature of any disclosure in respect of your records, you should apply in writing to [insert name of practice contact person].

1. You may insist that any disclosures are only to be made with your written consent.
2. You may inform the practice that on no account should the doctor disclose any of your patient information to anybody other than for the purposes of your care.

Please note that where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion that a serious crime has been or is being committed, which would include fraud or any threat to national security, by law consent of that individual does not have to be obtained.