

Empingham Medical Centre

Patient Online Access Policy (Detailed Coded Records Access – DCRA)

Patient Online Access Protocol Detailed Coded Records Access (DCRA)

Introduction

The GMS regulations 2015/16 state that practices must promote and offer to registered patients the facility to view their detailed coded record. This is to include all information that is held on the Practice's clinical system which is held in coded form unless any of the following apply:-

- In the reasonable opinion of the Practice, access to such information would not be in the patient's best interests because it is likely to cause serious harm to:-
 - the patient's physical or mental health, or
 - the physical or mental health of any other person
- The information includes a reference to any third party who has not consented to its disclosure.
- The information in the GP medical record contains a free text entry and it is not possible under the contractor's computerised clinical systems to separate that free text entry from other information in the record which is held in coded data form.

Patients continue to have the right to submit a Subject Access Request under the Data Protection Act 1998. However, as this differs from detailed coded records access the patient must submit this request in writing to the practice. Patient Services will either supply the appropriate application form or guide the patient to an electronic version. The Practice has the right to charge a fee for providing the information in a printed form, although patients accessing their detailed coded records online are able to copy and paste and print the information from the screen at no cost.

Registration for Detailed Coded Records Access

The practice accepts applications from patients as well as their proxy. Proxy access refers to access by somebody acting on behalf of the patient with the patient's consent.

An application form must be completed prior to access being enabled. Patient Services will either supply the appropriate application form or guide the patient to an electronic version.

The Practice reserves the right to review and remove access at any point if it is thought that it is in the best interests of the patient or if the services are being misused.

ID Verification

ID verification is required to ensure access is granted to patients/proxy users with a legitimate reason to access a record. This will prevent access being granted to the

wrong person and support the practice to adhere to information security guidelines. One form of photographic ID should be provided. Acceptable documents include passports and photo driving licences.

Documentary evidence that confirms identification checks have taken place will include the nature of the checks, who did them and when.

Patients will be provided with the following information when they request detailed coded records access:

- Application form “Application for online access to my detailed coded medical record”
- Leaflet – “Patient Online Giving you more choice in accessing GP services”
- Leaflet – “Patient Online Frequently asked questions – Patients”

Timescales

The timescales following receipt of a patient request are:

- Existing patients - 3 months, to allow time for the Practice to ensure the patient’s medical records are up to date and for the GP to consider the patient’s request as per guidance contained in the **Introduction**.
- New patients - 6 months, to allow time for the Practice to receive the patient’s medical records (paper and electronic versions), summarise those records (update the electronic records from the paper notes) and for the GP to meet the new patient before considering their request as per guidance contained in the **Introduction**.

Considerations/Approval of Access

The Practice will not approve on-line access to detailed coded records if it is deemed that it may cause physical and/or mental harm to the patient.

A GP will be responsible for checking if patients are on certain registers for example, learning difficulties, child protection or mental health registers or have been identified as a possible victim/perpetrator of domestic abuse. If necessary that GP will consult with the patient’s usual GP before access is granted/denied.

The GP will consider the following:

Mental Health Problems

- Patients with a mental illness have as much right as any patient to access to their records, however
 - if there is a likelihood that access to their record may cause an individual physical or mental harm then it may be necessary to redact some of the information within their record, or
 - in extreme circumstances access may be refused, in which case the named GP responsible for the care of the patient will have a conversation with the patient to explain the reasons for refusal of access.

Access for children

Children under the age of 16 will not be given online access to their medical records.

Proxy Access

A competent patient can choose and consent to allow access to relatives and/or carers. Patient Services will either supply the appropriate application form or guide the patient to an electronic version.

The Practice will ensure that the level of access granted to the Proxy is appropriate and does not exceed what has been agreed by the patient.

Coercion

'Coercion' is the act of governing the actions of another by force or by threat, in order to overwhelm and compel that individual to act against their will.

The practice will consider the risk of Coercion on a case by case basis as requests are received, and if necessary will decline access. The patient's named GP will discuss with the applicant the reasons for refusal of access.

If coercion is identified as a risk with regard to a patient previously registered for online services, then access will be immediately removed.

Hiding sensitive consultations

All domestic abuse consultations will be highlighted as confidential and will therefore be removed from online viewing. It will be made clear to patients that anything they say during a consultation in relation to this issue will not be viewable online.

Any consultations of a sensitive nature may be highlighted as confidential.

3rd Party Information

The Practice will not share any information held within a clinical record that is deemed as 3rd party information without explicit consent from the 3rd Party. Any patients requesting access to these details must make the Practice aware by submitting a Subject Access Request. Patient Services will either supply the appropriate application form or guide the patient to an electronic version.

Contents of a medical record

A patient's medical record may contain information that is historical and therefore forgotten, not relevant to themselves (including scanned letters), bad news or may show abnormal test results. If patients do identify any such information it is their responsibility to notify the practice immediately. Medical records will not be changed but a note will be added with the patient's comments/concerns.

Promoting Patient Online Access

The Practice will promote the Patient Online service to all patients. Methods of promotion are:

- Display of Patient Online posters within patient waiting areas
- Right-hand side of prescription
- Practice website
- Practice leaflet

Supporting information

www.nhs.uk/patientonline

http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/thenhs/records/healthrecords/Pages/what_to_do.aspx

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/thenhs/records/healthrecords/Documents/PatientGuidanceBooklet.pdf>