



## Right to see medical records

You have a legal right to see your own records. You do not have to explain why you want to see them.

Your records include any information about your physical or mental health recorded by a healthcare professional. This includes records made by hospital staff, GPs, dentists, and opticians. It can also include health records kept by your employer. They include details of consultation, laboratory reports and x-rays, letters and telephone calls, clinical notes, and prescription charts.

- You have the right to see **your records** unless:
  - a health professional thinks that seeing the records would be seriously harmful to your physical or mental health.
  - The records also relate to someone else.
- You can also nominate **someone else**, for example a solicitor, to view your records. You must give written consent
- You can ask to see the records of a **child under 16** if you have 'parental responsibility'. Your request, however, will not automatically be granted as the the best interests of the child will always be considered. If a healthcare provider is confident a child can understand their rights, then they will send the information to them rather than the parent. You cannot see the medical records of a **child over 16** without their written consent.

- If you wish to see the records of your **foster child**, you should check with the local authority or social worker to make sure you have the legal right to do so.
- If you wish to see the records of a **vulnerable adult**, you should first seek their written consent. You may then be able to see their records if a healthcare professional believes it is in the patient's best interests. If a person does not have mental capacity to manage their own affairs you have the right to request their records without their permission if:
  - You have a lasting power of attorney with authority to manage their properties and affairs; or
  - You have been appointed to make such decisions by the Court of Protection

Under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) accessing your medical records is free. You can view a summary of your GP records online.

The Department of Health has said that patients should be able to see their original records if they want to. If you want to see originals state this in your formal application.

## Accessing your GP records

Your GP record includes information on medicines, vaccines, and test results. It will also include communications between your GP and other services. For example, referral letters and hospital discharge summaries



You can view a summary of your GP records online by registering for online services. If you do not wish to use the online service, you can request your records in writing.

### Registering for online services

- Find out what online service provider your GP uses - by asking them or visiting the surgery website
- Tell your GP surgery you want to sign up for online services either over the phone or in person. If you go to the surgery in person, take some form of photo identification and proof of address
- Fill in the short registration form you are given or sent
- Login using the registration details and instructions your GP surgery gives you.

### Using the NHS App to access records

You can also view your GP records using the NHS App. This is free and also enables you to book appointments and order repeat prescriptions. It can be downloaded from the App Store and Google Play.

### Formally requesting your medical records in writing.

You may decide to do this if:

- The information you need is not covered by your GP record
- You want hard copies of records
- You do not have online access
- You do not want to use online services.

You need to:

- Find out where your records are held. Your GP should be able to tell you this.
- Write a letter or email making a formal request for copies of your

records. Include information on exactly what you want to see.

- Reply as soon as you can if you are asked for more information. Keep copies of any letters you send and receive.
- When you go to view your records, take some form of identification such as a passport or driving licence. Do not send original documents in the post.

### Further Information

[The Patients Association](http://www.patients-association.org.uk) - [www.patients-association.org.uk](http://www.patients-association.org.uk)

The Patients Association offers a free national helpline providing specialist information and advice to help patients make sense of their health and social care.

### [AVMA](http://www.avma.org.uk)

The charity for patient safety and justice.

### [POWHER Advocacy Services](http://www.powher.org.uk) –

Information, advice and advocacy services across England

### **NHS UK** – [nhs.uk](http://nhs.uk)

[GP health record](http://nhs.uk)

### **NHS Scotland**

[Accessing your health records](http://www.nhs.uk)

### **NHS Wales**

[How to get medical records in Wales.](http://www.nhs.uk)

### **NIDirect** – [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

[Information on accessing medical records in Northern Ireland.](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

### About this document

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Caring for children with heart conditions

# Factsheet



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