

Online access to complete medical records will no longer be offered from 3rd December 2018.

This service to view the complete medical record, including free-text written by clinicians and all letters, was made available from May 2018 in the interest of data sharing and access.

Since May, we have found that it takes our GPs a significant amount of time to check the records before allowing a patient to access their complete record. We are required by law to check for Third Party content, and this takes many hours as all letters must be read as well as all appointment entries. We have also found that the majority of requests for access to the complete record are made simply because the option is there, rather than because of a particular need for information.

The Partners and Practice Manager have given this careful consideration, and have decided that, as a Practice, it is not possible to continue to offer this service. Instead we will return to offering the coded record as the greatest level of access, which has historically been satisfactory to our patients.

The coded record includes the following information:

- Demographics
- Allergic/adverse reactions
- Medication (dose, quantity and last issue date)
- Immunisations
- Results (numerical values and normal range)
- Values (BP, HbA1c)
- Codes for problems/diagnosis
- Procedure codes (medical or surgical) and codes in consultation (signs, symptoms)
- Codes showing referral made or letters received (no attachments)
- Other codes (ethnicity, QOF)

The codified form shows titles and dates of problems/symptoms, but does not include “free text” written by clinicians. It also does not include letters. A GP must still check the record before approving a patient’s request for access, but this is a far quicker process for them than reviewing the complete record.

Withdrawing the option for access to the complete record will be effective for our whole practice population, including those who already have access. Those patients who currently have complete online access will be written to individually, and will have until 3rd December to copy anything they wish to keep from their complete record via our website. Future requests for the complete online record will be advised that we can only offer the coded record.

You are still legally entitled to see your complete medical record, and may do this by making a Subject Access Request.

Thank you for your understanding. Our GPs are under enormous pressure to provide safe and effective care, and we wish to protect their time to see patients and deliver NHS services as much as possible.

If you have any concerns or complaints about this, please speak to Kayleigh Moore, the IT Manager. Thank you.

Dr Nelson and Partners

Overton Park Surgery