

Access to Medical Reports

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to provide information on the patient's rights to view medical reports prepared on his / her behalf in connection with insurance or employment.

The rights of patients are governed within the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 and apply to medical reports prepared by the GP responsible for the clinical care of that patient (i.e. the registered GP practice). Where a report is prepared for similar purposes by an alternative medical practitioner, for example a doctor employed by an insurance company or employer, then these reports do not fall within the scope of the regulations. In these circumstances the Data Protection Act 1998 will apply.

Provisions

- The patient must be aware of, and must give consent to, the preparation and release of a medical report. Reports should not be prepared where a GP becomes aware that the patient is not aware of the request, for example in subsequent requests by insurance companies unrelated to an existing consented application.
- Patients may decline consent at any time prior to release of information.
- Where a patient indicates in the consent that he / she wishes to view the report prior to its dispatch to the enquirer, the report must not be released until the wishes of the patient have been met.
- The practice will advise patients wishing to view their reports that the report is available to view once it has been prepared. The patient will be advised that they have 21 days to view this before it will be sent.
- The practice will encourage patients to view reports promptly. A copy will be provided, subject to normal copying charges, where requested.
- Where a patient disagrees with any part of the report he / she can request amendment. The GP will determine whether the amendment can be made. If an amendment is not appropriate the patient may attach a note to the report for dispatch. Requests to amend should be made in writing.
- Where a patient disagrees with part of the report, and an amendment or an attached note is considered to be inadequate or unacceptable by the patient, then the patient may refuse consent for the report to be sent, and this refusal will be accepted.
- Copy reports will be retained for 6 months following issue, during which time a copy will be provided (subject to normal charges) to the patient if required.

RESOURCES

[Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 \(c. 28\)](#)