

Secure online access to your GP medical record

Patient Access is the name of the software module offered by GP surgeries running the EMIS GP records system. Other GP software systems will offer very similar modules, so the basic principles detailed in this factsheet will apply to all GP surgeries.

Patient Access enables you to do the following online (or via a smartphone app):

- Book appointments
- Order repeat prescriptions
- Update your contact details (address, phone numbers etc)
- Access your full electronic GP record securely online

This facility is free, both to the surgery and to patients.

You can look at www.patient.co.uk/patient-access to get an idea of what it's like.

You can logon and use Patient Access on a computer, tablet/iPad or via a smartphone app, freely downloadable for Android (Google Play) and iOS (iTunes).

You can potentially have access to your *full* electronic GP record including consultations, medication, allergies, vaccinations, GP and hospital letters, blood test results and x-ray/scan reports.

You are also able to check the results of any blood tests or x-rays requested by your GP, download them, print them off at home, take them to hospital appointments etc.

You are then able to show your GP record, if you wish, to any healthcare professional that you might see, anywhere in the world (e.g. in a GP out-of-hours centre, A&E department or hospital), directly, or by permitting secure temporary access, or by exporting your record to a secure mobile device.

Whether you have these facilities enabled or not will not affect your care from your surgery – it is simply an additional benefit that is being offered.

Please note:

Patient Access has absolutely nothing to do with the national NHS Databases, such as the Summary Care Record or the Hampshire Health Record. It is also unrelated to other local data sharing projects such as the Oxfordshire Care Summary or the Leeds Care Record, or other data streaming projects. It has nothing to do with secondary uses of your GP information, such as risk stratification or the National Audits.

Opting out of any or all of the NHS Databases, or secondary uses, does not prevent you from using Patient Access.

- With Patient Access, no data is uploaded to any database, government-controlled or not.
- With Patient Access, the only person with access to your record via the secure website is you
- With Patient Access, your GP remains the data controller for your information

You can apply for Patient Access at your GP surgery using [this form](#) .

Hand it in to your surgery *in person*, bringing ID with you (e.g. passport).

How might online access to my medical record be of benefit?

Access abroad: You may be in another country and taken ill. You may decide to allow the doctor temporary access to your records (a personal decision). All they need is access to the internet and your login details (or you login for them). When access to your record by that doctor is no longer needed, you let your surgery know and they immediately disable access until they can provide you with new login credentials.

A&E/ Outpatients/Out of Hours GP: If you are going to see a healthcare professional in hospital you can allow them to see your records online if there is a computer in the room, or print out the relevant information and take it with you.


Relatives having access: *Only if you wish* you could share all your records with relatives or just part by printing the part you wish to share.

Saving Time: Blood results, x-rays or letters (e.g. from consultant/specialist out-patient appointments) can be checked. If results are normal it saves you time not having to travel to the surgery or ring up for the results.

Information for Forms: If you need to know when you had your immunisations, what allergies you have or major diagnoses, you can look them up.

Better understanding: If you did not understand the conversation with the doctor or nurse, you can look at the record of that consultation. Patients have found that that makes the discussion easier to understand and remember. You will also find that the information buttons explain technical terms for you. This can be extremely helpful.

Correcting information: You can see if there are incorrect entries in your GP record, or missing information, and speak to your GP about these

Medication information: You can easily check information about any medication prescribed by clicking on the  button listed next to your medication in the list. This also includes information on how to take the medication. You can check what results mean or check a condition. There are links to support groups e.g. Diabetes UK.

Security: It's as safe as internet banking **IF** you keep your passwords and security questions secure. You wouldn't leave your bankers card and pin numbers lying around (particularly at work) and then wonder how someone managed to withdraw money from your account. Don't leave your passwords where they can be found. This may also include at home if you don't want family members to view your records. Don't use obvious ones such as names, birthdays or anniversaries etc.

Disadvantages

Forgotten History: There may be something in your history you don't want any family members to see. It might be information you had put to the back of your mind and are now confronted with it!

Complex information: The record is designed to be used by doctors for doctors. There will be abbreviations and technical terms. However, most patients understand most of what they read and the information buttons linked with problem titles offer detailed explanations. Please ask if you do not understand.

Test Results: Results can be difficult to understand. Results may be abnormal and cause you to worry.

3rd Party Info: You might want to tell the doctor something about your spouse/partner/child etc in confidence.

- If the doctor records the information and the patient then sees this it could cause problems.
- If the doctor doesn't then vital information may get lost or forgotten
- The information may be malicious and again cause problems

The website <http://myrecord.org.uk/> has very good information about all of this.

Making your medical information available to healthcare professionals outside of the surgery

Patient Access allows you to make your medical information available to health professionals outside of our surgery, if and when you want, anywhere in the world.

You may choose:

- only to view your medical record yourself
- to allow others (e.g. relatives or carers) access to it, temporarily or permanently
- to allow healthcare professionals access to it, anywhere in the world, on a temporary basis
- or any combination of the above

How would this work?

Allowing relatives or carers access to your medical record online via Patient Access is easy – you will simply need to give them your login details. If ever you change your mind, your surgery can reset your account and provide you (alone) with new login credentials (see below).

Allowing doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals access, home or abroad, is also straightforward.

Such access could be:

- At an out-of-hours GP centre, perhaps at night, bank holidays, or at the weekends
- At an A&E department
- At a GP surgery in a different part of the country (if you have need to be seen there)
- At a community pharmacist
- During a hospital out-patient consultation with a specialist
- If you are admitted to hospital for any reason
- If you are taken ill abroad

Your Patient Access medical record viewer account can be accessed, either:

- By yourself (e.g. on your smartphone or home PC), or
- By a carer/relative with you, or
- By providing the medical staff where you attend with your login details

The address for accessing the details via the internet is

<https://patient.emisaccess.co.uk>

Once there is no further need for others to access your account, simply contact your surgery and they can instantly disable the existing login credentials and issue you with new ones.

Alternatively, Patient Access allows you to *grant temporary access* to your record for 24 hours via a unique link and secured using an access code.

See here for detailed information about this facility:

<http://tinyurl.com/tempaccess>

Patient Access also allows you to *export your medical record* and either print it off, or save it securely to a mobile device, and then take it with you to show a healthcare professional as needed.

Patient Access is just one way by which you can make your medical information available to other healthcare professionals.

When it comes to allowing healthcare professionals outside of your GP surgery access to information from your GP record, you have *options*:

- You do not have to allow any such access - **by opting out of *all* the NHS data sharing schemes**
- You can allow *nationwide* access to limited information from your GP record (allergies and medication) by not opting out of The **Summary Care Record**
- You can allow your *entire* GP record to be extracted, uploaded, combined with your information from hospital trusts, mental health services, social care records and community services, and made available *regionally*
You can do this by not opting out of your **local care record database** (e.g. The Hampshire Health Record)
- You can allow your GP record to be *streamed or viewable* in real time, *locally*, without being uploaded or extracted, and with genuine control over the information shared, by not opting out of **EMIS Web data streaming**
- You can control access to your GP record, *completely and personally*, by allowing temporary **secure online access to your GP record**
In theory, your information is available to healthcare professionals *worldwide*, should you allow it in any given situation
- If you have enabled **secure online access to your GP record**, then [you can export your record](#) and either print it off, or save it securely on a mobile device, and then take it with you to show a healthcare professional
- You can choose to share information in **many other ways** - for example, medical alert cards (such as [MediPal](#), [Steroid alert cards](#), [Biological therapy cards](#), [rare diseases cards](#), even [bus pass cards](#)), medical alert jewellery (such as [MedicAlert](#), [SOS Talisman](#)), [Zaptag](#), [Tap2Tag](#) and [EIO smart cards](#)

You can have any combination of the above, opting out of any particular data sharing schemes, and/or opting in to any that you wish to.

More information about all of these NHS data sharing schemes is available at:

www.nhsdatasharing.info