

Frequently asked questions for patients

What is My Care Record?

The NHS in Bucks has introduced My Care Record, an electronic view of your GP record that can be accessed locally when you need treatment from somebody other than your own GP. My Care Record contains key information from your GP practice including the medicines you are taking, allergies you suffer from and any bad reactions to medicines you have had in the past.

If you have an accident or fall ill, the people caring for you in places like accident and emergency departments and GP out of hours services will be better equipped to treat you if they have this information.

My Care Record will only be available to authorised health and social care staff locally, and they will ask your permission before they look at it.

What is included in My Care Record?

Information about medications you are taking, any allergies you may have or details of medication that hasn't agreed with you in the past, details of any health conditions which mean you shouldn't have certain medicines and any factors which need to be considered before discharging you from hospital.

I'm not sure if I want to be involved. Who can I ask?

You can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), Healthwatch Bucks, or your GP practice.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

NHS South, Central and West Commissioning Support Unit (SCW CSU)

2nd Floor Albert House, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 1AG
Telephone 0800 328 5640 or email cscsu.palscomplaints@nhs.net

Healthwatch Bucks <http://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/> or telephone 0845 260 6216 or 01844 348849.

What are the benefits of sharing my record?

We know people understand the importance of health and social care professionals having access to basic information about patients and the people they care for.

This is especially important when care is urgent or required during the evenings or weekends. The information in My Care Record will save time and could also be life-saving in some circumstances.

Without My Care Record people would need to wait for information to be sent from GPs during surgery hours, which could cause delay in providing treatment, care or medication.

How does My Care Record work?

The local doctor, nurse, carer, social worker, or specialist will ask you permission before accessing your record. They will see your medical history as it is held by your own GP. Only one copy of the record exists. New information e.g. any treatment received, will be sent to your GP, who will then update your record to maintain its accuracy. At no point are copies of your record created, copied or kept. Each individual who has access to My Care Record has a unique identification to access the records, this means we can monitor its use and track precisely who has accessed the record and for what purpose.

What happens if I am not in a fit state to give consent at the time?

If you are unable to give consent, for instance if you are unconscious, the professional will be able to access your record but will have to provide a reason for audit purposes.

I have concerns about sharing some parts of my record. What can I do?

Any part of your record relating to sexual health will not be shared. If you have other concerns speak to your GP practice.

I've made my decision – what do I do next?

You don't need to do anything if you are happy for your GP to share your medical details with other professionals.

If you want to opt out of allowing doctors, nurses, carers, social workers, or specialists to access your information, you can collect an opt out form from your GP Practice. Once completed and signed, return it to your practice.

What happens if I opt out?

The NHS will do its best to provide you with safe, efficient care, whether you have opted in or opted out of My Care Record. Please be assured that the NHS and Department of Health is committed to honouring your decision and doing all it can to ensure you get the best healthcare possible.

Remember that you can change your mind at any time.

How do I opt out?

Pick up an opt out form from your GP practice. Once you have completed it return it to your practice.

Can children's records be opted out? What about someone with mental health problems?

A parent or guardian can request to opt out children under 16 but ultimately it is the GP's decision whether to share the records or not, because of their duty of care to the child. If you are the parent or guardian of a child under 16 and feel that they are able to understand, then you should make this information available to them.

In addition, someone who is legally responsible for another adult can opt out on their behalf.

What happens if I change my mind - what do I do?

If you have opted out and change your mind, you can opt in by informing your GP Practice of your decision. If you didn't opt out and have now decided that you want to, you can pick up a form from your GP Practice. Once completed and signed, return it to your Practice.

Will I be able to access the information being held about me?

Yes, you can ask to see your record (please note that some Practices may charge a small administration fee).

Can you provide more detail about opting out of My Care record?

To be clear no data is "uploaded" to My Care Record. All data remains in the original data repository, i.e. the GP system. It is only ever presented as a view, which cannot be downloaded or copied.

My Care Record works on a "consent at the point of care" basis so opting out isn't strictly necessary, as the patient will always be asked, at the point of care, if they consent to their record being viewed. If the patient does not agree the record is not viewed.

All access to the record is logged, fully auditable and steps are in place to ensure this takes place on a regular basis.

If a patient does elect to opt out of My Care Record they should be aware that their record will be blocked by a code and no sharing of the record will subsequently take place or indeed be possible unless the code is removed. This could mean that if you are unable to grant consent, for example if you are unconscious or unable to speak, the person caring for you will not be able to view your details even if they declare a legitimate relationship due to the emergency. This is also the case for the Summary Care Record.

My Care Record appears very similar to the Summary Care Record. Why is this?

My Care Record utilises technology that enables a real time view of the GP record, with the data remaining within the original repository i.e. GP System. It is not a database.

The Summary Care Record is a national program and the patient data is uploaded, at intervals, to the National Spine.

Summary Care record is national, whereas My Care Record is local.

I have previously opted out of the national Summary Care Record. Why do I need to opt out of My Care Record as well?

The opt out code for Summary Care Record (national) differs from the opt out code for My Care Record (local). It is felt that patients need to understand the implications of opting out of My Care Record before they do so, as the specific purpose of our local project is to enable those local clinicians, who are most likely to be involved in the care of a local resident, to see that data which will have the most benefit to any patient's treatment.

Why are registered patients expected to opt out of My Care Record instead of voluntarily opting in?

My Care Record adopts a “consent at the point of care” model. The patient will always be asked if they consent to their record being viewed. If consent is refused, then the clinician will not view the record. Consent refusal will be documented by the treating clinician and recorded by the system. If patients wish to opt out they should only do so after considering the implications. Information Governance experts have been consulted throughout the project and advice on the approach has been taken from the Information Commissioner Office. The Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Groups are confident that our processes are robust and that we have fully complied with all legislative and governance protocols.