

Access to Healthcare Records

Procedure for Accessing Healthcare Records.

- Access applications are logged upon receipt of a completed application form.
- A request is made to the areas that hold the relevant records.
- Once all the required records have been gathered they will be sent to each treating clinician for authorisation to release.

An appointment is arranged for the applicant to view the original records.

or

The requested copy records are sent out, via Recorded Delivery unless otherwise specified.

- The Trust expects to provide all requested documentation within 40 working days of receipt of a valid request. If for any reason we are unable to meet this deadline, the applicant will be informed.

The Trust may refuse to release patient records if the following applies:

- Disclosure is likely to cause serious harm to the physical and/or mental wellbeing of the patient or any other individual connected with that patient.
- The patient is deemed incapable of understanding the nature of the application.
- The patient is under 16 years of age and is deemed not in their best interest to have access to their records.
- A third party has applied for access to a patient's records and the patient themselves has clearly stated that they do not wish any disclosure of their records.
- The medical records contain any information showing that the person was or may have been born following treatment defined in the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Act 1990.

To access records pertaining to a patient currently being treated by the Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust

You can view a current patient's records, provided the clinician treating the patient has been informed and has given consent (subject to the exclusions listed in this document).

- An immediate review of a patient's records may not always be possible, but the department will endeavour to make an appointment convenient to all parties as soon as possible.

Access to Child's Healthcare Records.

- If the patient is under the age of 16 and the Trust agrees that disclosure would not be detrimental to the physical and/or mental wellbeing of the patient access may be granted to a parent or guardian.
- Dependant on age and/or understanding the Child, they may be asked whether they agree to the release of their records.

Note: The Trust may contact both parents/guardians if a request is made.

Access to a Deceased Persons Healthcare Records.

- Access to deceased a patient's records may be granted if written consent was obtained from the patient before death, or if the applicant has been named in the patient's records as a next of kin or named executor of the estate.
- For deceased patients where no written consent is available access to records may only be granted to an authorised third party.

Note: If the Trust is unsure as to the identity of the person seeking access, the named next of kin (as retained in the case notes) will be contacted to verify the validity of any such request.

- The Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust reserve the right to request proof of the applicant's right to Access the notes of a deceased person.

Charges Relating to Accessing Healthcare Records?

The Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust does not charge service users for healthcare records.

But for request from third Parties such as solicitors the Trust will issues a fee of £10 for viewing healthcare records. This is to cover the administrative costs undertaken in the retrieval and validation of case notes

- For copies of records an invoice, up to a maximum of £50, will be raised to cover administrative and photocopying charges.
- Requests for Deceased Persons notes are covered by the Access to Medical Records Act 1990 and under the terms of this act there is no upper limit for charges for copying records.? If the fee for copying deceased records is going to exceed £30 we will contact you beforehand.

If you feel an Access Request has been unfairly denied or you wish to make a compliant with regards to the contents of your Records?

- You may contact the Information Governance Manager in writing, detailing the records you wish to have amended and your letter will then be placed on file within the written records.
- Or if you remain dissatisfied with the quality/availability of the requested patient records, you may contact the Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trusts Complaints Office on 01202 277024 for further advice.

For any further information please contact:

- The Access to Records Team on (01202 277327)

Access to Records
Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust

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