



Dr J Evans Dr J Preston Dr I Hamid

Dear Patients,

You may be aware that NHS England have determined that from 1st November 2022 all patients will have complete prospective access to their medical records, with surgeries being required to enable this en masse. This instruction also includes automatically provisioning prospective access for patients who turn 16 years of age.

We are advocates of patient having access to their medical records and encourage this, especially to view test results rather than ring the surgery. In fact, 43% of our population have some form of online access, either to book appointments or order medication and 25% are able to view elements of their medical records. So, whilst we support the principle of patient access, we are currently providing access in a manner that we determine to be safe (ie with third party data redacted), in order to minimise the risk of data breaches pertaining to other individuals, named in patient records.

We also have significant concerns about risks relating to safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children, and the risk of harm (up to and including loss of life, particularly femicide) that may result if/when patient data is revealed to third parties under coercion or threat. Under the current planned changes to the system, when a patient moves surgery, there is no guarantee that any redaction will transfer also, thus increasing risk. These concerns have been raised with NHS England and we have yet to receive a satisfactory response.

We therefore regret to advise that, in light of the current lack of ability to enable mass online access to patient records safely, we are unable to comply with NHS England's plan, for fear of the consequences to our most vulnerable patients.

The BMA have provided us with guidance around our responsibilities as Data controllers. We WILL continue to enable individual level patient access upon request, when we are sure the notes concerned have been appropriately checked and safely redacted and that providing access, you or others will come to no harm. We trust in your understanding and are happy to discuss this with any patients as needed.

Thank you for reading

The Partners
Green Valleys Health