

Watton Medical Practice

Sharing your medical information

Background

For a number of years, work has been ongoing to improve the way that medical records are made available to treating clinicians. Our main computer system is called SystmOne, which has the advantage of enabling information to be shared between certain health professionals.

Enhanced Data Sharing Model (EDSM) enables us, with your consent, to share your medical records with those in the NHS who are involved in your care. NHS staff can only access shared information if they are involved in your care and being an electronic service, an audit log is maintained showing when and who has accessed medical records.

EDSM should not be confused with Care.Data. EDSM only allows those treating the patient to access medical records. It does not enable patient records to be used for research or any other purposes.

We already share records of children for child protection reasons and patients who are under the care of the District Nursing Team. This helps clinicians to make decisions based upon a wider knowledge of the patient and also helps us to reduce the number of times that patients or family members are asked the same question. **In short it assists clinicians to provide more 'joined up care'.**

If I agreed, who could see my records?

EDSM will allow clinicians treating you, who have access to SystmOne, to view and in some cases update your medical records. Locally this includes the Walk-In Centre, many departments at local hospitals (including Accident & Emergency) and community services, such as the District Nursing Team. It is anticipated that over time more health services will be able to benefit from EDSM.

Clinicians outside of the surgery who wish to access your medical records will ask for your consent to do so and will need to have been issued with a NHS smartcard. This is a 'chip and pin' card, similar to a bank card.

Can I 'opt out' and choose who sees my record?

Yes you can. Under EDSM there are two levels of consent. The first is to agree to sharing your medical records OUT of the practice. This is your agreement that records maintained by your GP can be seen, **subject to your authority at the time**, by clinicians working outside of the surgery. The second level is agreeing to share your records IN. This means that your GP can see the records made by other health professionals who have been treating you.

However, as the treating clinician needs to ask your permission to see the records at the beginning of each period of care, **you are in control of who can see your medical information.**

For example, the diagram below shows that the patient has agreed to share his medical records with the District Nurse and the surgery. However, whilst he is happy for his GP to see notes made by the local smoking cessation adviser, he does not want the adviser to have access to his other medical records.



As EDSM has been designed to enhance patient care we will automatically 'opt you in' to both parts of the scheme.

If you prefer not to be, then please mention it to a member of the reception team. You are free to change your mind at any time.

As EDSM has been designed to enhance patient care, we will automatically 'opt you in' to both parts of the scheme. If you prefer not to be, then please mention it to a member of the reception team. You are free to change your mind at any time.

I can see the benefits of the other people treating me seeing my notes, but what if there is a matter that I want to stay just between me and my doctor?

You can ask for any consultation to be marked as private. This means that viewing is restricted to the surgery, but allows the rest of the record to be viewed by whoever else is treating you. **It is your responsibility to ask for a consultation to be marked as private.**

Can I change my mind?

Yes, you can always change your mind and amend who you consent to see your records. For instance, you can decline to share your records OUT from the surgery, but if you built up a relationship with the physiotherapist who was treating you and they asked you if they could look at an x-ray report, you could give your consent at that point for them to view your records. You will be referred back to us to change your preference, so the physiotherapy team will not be able to see your records instantly, but should be able to by the time of your next appointment with them.

If I decline, what happens in an emergency?

In the event of a medical emergency, for instance if you were taken unconscious to Accident & Emergency and the clinician treating you felt it was important to be able to see your medical records, they are able to override any consents set.

However, the doctor has to give a written reason for doing so. Where this happens, an audit is undertaken by the local Caldicott Guardian (the person who is responsible for Data Protection compliance).

Can anyone else see my medical records?

On a daily basis we get requests from Insurance Companies to either have copies of medical records or excerpts from patients' medical records. This requires your signed consent before any information is released.

Occasionally we are asked for information from the medical records for legal reasons. Again this has to be done with your written consent, or in very exceptional circumstances, by court order.

Any questions?

If you have any questions, please speak to reception. If necessary, the receptionist will arrange for someone to give you a call.