

Crossley Street Surgery
Online Medical Record Access
Guide for Patients

This practice is now offering you the opportunity to use the Internet to securely view your electronic medical record held by the surgery. There is also a page on our website, www.crossleystreetsurgery.co.uk, with links to information leaflets and websites such as NHS Choices and patient.co.uk where you can find more information to help you understand about what you read in your record.

This is a detailed guide, but please read it all. It contains important information that you need to use the medical record viewer safely.

How to Apply for Access to Your Online Medical Records

If you are already registered to book appointments and order repeat prescriptions online you do not need to register again. Once you are registered to use SystmOnline, you will need to bring the following to the Surgery:

- signed consent form (you can download from our website)
- completed questionnaire (you can download questionnaire from our website)
- one form of photo ID and one proof of address:
 - one of the following: passport or photo driving licence AND
 - one official letter bearing your name and address dated within the last three months from any of the following: your bank, building society, local council, utility company or landline telephone provider

(Note: a photographic driving licence will suffice for both photo ID AND proof of address)

You must bring the documents to the surgery yourself so that your identity can be verified.

Before you sign the consent form you should be happy that you understand what the system does and what your responsibilities are.

What Can I See?

The system allows you to view the following areas of your medical record:

- A summary that gives you the most important and recent entries in your health record
- Consultations including: date, health professional seen, reason for visit, history, examination, outcome, investigations, etc.
- Allergies
- Results showing recent investigations such as blood results, blood pressures and x-rays
- Some vaccinations
- Medications
- Letters to and from the GP

Where is my confidential medical information held whilst I am viewing my online medical record and who has access to it?

The information you view online comes from Crossley Street Surgery's clinical system. This information is encrypted and securely sent to your computer.

None of the medical information that is shown on the online system is held permanently on any computer except the server which holds the original data for your surgery.

How will other people be prohibited from seeing my record?

To view your online record you have to identify yourself with a password and a User ID that only you know. Unless you reveal this information to someone else, you will be the only person able to access your medical record via the online system.

What if I find an error in my medical record or if I see someone else's medical information?

On the Test Results page some readings may be recorded differently in the Normal/Abnormal column than they are in the 'Comments' section of the same page. The readings in the column are automatically generated by the laboratory but the Comments are those made by one of our GPs here at Crossley Street. They may differ because that result is normal or abnormal for you. This is not an error. All test results received from the lab are reviewed by our doctors.

If you do find any errors in your medical record you must inform the practice using the 'contact us' page on the surgery website.

If you see someone else's information you should immediately exit from the system and inform the practice by telephone, or by using the 'contact us' page on our website.

What if I don't want to register for SystemOnline?

If you do not want to register to use SystemOnline you can still access all the practice's services exactly as before (appointments and repeat prescriptions). Your decision not to register will not affect your treatment or your relationship with your GP practice in any way.

REMEMBER TO LOG OUT FROM SYSTEMONLINE WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED

Other considerations:

Having access to their medical records has proved popular for many patients elsewhere in the country. Before requesting access to your records it is important that you look at both the advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages

GP/Healthcare

The patient has an active role in their own healthcare and develops a good relationship with their GP and practice.

Results

You can check any results or letters as soon as they arrive in the practice without ringing the surgery.

If you are going to see a healthcare professional in hospital you can allow them to see your records online or print out the relevant information and take it with you. This can be very helpful to the consultant.

Care in the Community

It might be that you are receiving care at home and it is necessary for the latest results of tests to be known before treatment is given. You can check the results yourself or allow anyone else you see fit to do so.

Relatives having access

Only if you wish, you could share all your records with relatives or just part by printing off the relevant sections.

Nursing Homes

If a relative is in a nursing home, and you have been given access to their records, you can monitor their care. Records of visits by doctors along with comments by the doctor will be recorded here

Saving time

For most people there is never enough time— doctors included. Much time can be saved as well as ordering prescriptions via the net, by checking blood test results, x-rays or letters. If these are normal it will save time by not having to phone or travel to the surgery. It could leave an appointment free for the doctor to see another patient and saves time for reception staff answering the telephones.

Information for forms (insurance, travel)

If you need to know when you had your immunisations or what allergies you have or are asked questions about any significant illnesses, you will be able to look them up yourself. Please note that old immunisations may not be available as these may be stored on your paper records.

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 this makes the discussion easier to understand and remember.

Security

It's as safe as internet banking IF you keep your password secure. Don't leave your password where it can be found. Don't use obvious ones such as names, birthdays or anniversaries etc.

Disadvantages

Forgotten history

There may be something in your history you had forgotten. 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 the problem offer detailed explanations. Please ask if you don't understand.

Test Results

Results can be difficult to understand. Results may be abnormal and cause you to worry. What to do!

- Ring the surgery and ask for telephone consultation
- If the surgery is closed
 - Don't look at the results if you are prone to worry
 - Wait until the surgery opens before checking
 - Speak with NHS Direct
- Remember had you not had access you would not have known the results until either the doctor/practice contacted you or you called for the results

Third Party information

A patient may want to tell the doctor something about their spouse/partner/child in confidence and the doctor will record this information. You must consider that:

- The doctor needs to record this information or it may get overlooked or forgotten
- You may read something in your records from a third party that you may find upsetting
- The information recorded may be inaccurate and cause problems

Be aware that:

- **Password**
 - These are case sensitive (upper and lower case are not interchangeable)
 - Take care to differentiate between the number 0 and the capital letter O
 - Don't leave your password around for anyone to see
- **What if I mess it up?**
 - No matter what you click you cannot alter your record. It is a 'read-only' record

Proxy Access

Formal proxy access may be given to a patient's representative (proxy) with the informed consent of the patient or if the patient lacks capacity to consent, in the patient's best interests in the judgement of their GP.

The proxy does not have to be a registered patient at the practice, but must be registered for online services and always use their own login credentials.

The practice may refuse or withdraw proxy access if they judge that it is in the patient's best interests to do so.

Legitimate reasons for the practice to authorise proxy access **without** the patient's consent include:

1. The patient has been assessed as lacking capacity to make a decision on granting proxy access and
 - a. the applicant has a lasting power of attorney for health and welfare registered with the Office of the Public Guardian,
 - b. the applicant is acting as a Court Appointed Deputy on behalf of the patient, or
 - c. the GP considers it to be in the patient's interest in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 code of practice.
2. The patient is a child who has been assessed as not competent to make a decision on granting proxy access.

Coercion

Coercion is the act of governing the actions of another by force or by threat, in order to overwhelm and compel that individual to act against their will.

Online access to medical records provides new and additional opportunities for coercive behaviour. For example, some types of data in a patient's record are particularly useful to an abuser, so it is important to bear this in mind when requesting online access to your medical records.

The practice will bear in mind the possibility of coercion when reviewing the record for harmful data before giving access to a patient. If the possibility of any kind of coercion is suspected, or if the suspicion arises after the patient has been given access then the practice will withdraw access while the facts are established.

What to do next

Carefully weigh up the advantages against the disadvantages. Consider, are there other issues that have not been answered for you?

It's up to the individual to decide if they want access and **not** other members of the family.

If any of the disadvantages are a problem for you then Medical Record Access may not be for you. The treatment you receive or the relationship with your doctor will not be affected in any way. You can still use the online appointment system and order your repeat prescriptions online.

Being able to choose to have access to records is for the benefit of the patient.

If you wish to apply for access to your online medical records:

You will need to download and print the **consent form** and **questionnaire** from the surgery website. If you are unable to print these forms, you can ask for a copy from reception. These will need to be completed and signed. Bring them into the surgery with two forms of ID as outlined in this guide.

THE PERSON ASKING FOR ACCESS MUST BRING IN THE DOCUMENTS THEMSELVES

Please be aware that access to your online medical records may not be appropriate in all cases and the GP will write to you if they feel that access to your online medical records is not suitable for you.

If access is approved, which may take up to 14 days, your account will be enabled.

You will receive an email once your access has been approved by the GP with relevant instructions on how to proceed.