

Registrations Policy

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Background

Practices have a contractual duty to provide emergency and immediately necessary treatment. This is free of charge for everyone. They cannot refuse to register someone because of any 'protected characteristic' under the Equality Act 2010, other grounds such as social class, appearance, or medical condition (NHS constitution), should register patients without requiring any documentation. All practice staff will be provided with training at induction so that they fully understand their role and responsibilities as a result of this policy.

This document explains the registration process and procedures staff must follow when patients present to the practice and outlines the policy all staff must follow when close family members request to register at their place of work.

Registration Process

All practices are required to have agreed catchment area with their commissioner (NHS England or CCG). Anyone who resides within the practice's catchment area is entitled to apply to register with the practice. Practice catchment area should be clearly advertised to patients on the GPs practice leaflet or website

As of 31st October 2024, practices are required to have the 'register for a gp surgery' online tool activated and easily accessible for patients on their website. Staff should first encourage patients to use this online service, if they cannot use this online tool paper registration forms (matching the online form) should be available.

There are no formal requirements for patients to produce identity or residence information (proof of address). Patients must still be registered on application without this information unless the practice has reasonable grounds to decline.

Patients presenting as homeless should be registered under the practice address if they consent to this. The Practice and the patient should come to an agreement on how they will be contacted regarding their care, and that they will attend the practice to collect their post.

New Patient Health Checks

All newly registered patients above the age of 18 should be offered a New Patient Health Check with a Health Care Assistant after they have been registered onto the clinical system.

Temporary Registrations

The length of time a patient intends to reside in an area will dictate whether they should be registered as temporary or permanent. If a patient is in the area for less than 3 months they should be offered a temporary registration.

Registering Children

The legal definition of a child is anyone aged 0-18 years. Some young people may be able to make independent decisions from as young as 13 years old, dependant on their Gillick competency.

Practices should be aware of the identity of those registering with a child and their relationship to that child. If any children under the age of 16 try to register alone or with an adult that does not have parental responsibility the Practice Safeguarding Lead should be notified.

Where practices are unsure around the identity of a child or the adult registering with them, they could consider:

- Requesting proof of identity for each child (in the form of a birth certificate, red book or other official documentation)
- Checking the adults ID to see if this matches with the child's details

The practice should not refuse to register a child without an adult, instead notifying the Practice Safeguarding Lead or Practice Manager immediately to be investigated. There may be legitimate exceptions to this, such as parents serving in the armed forces and as such are registered with an 'armed forces' GP.

When parents / carers have been removed from the practice due to aggressive and or violent behaviour risk assessments should be completed to identify any risks to the children.

Veterans

A veteran is an ex-service person or reservist who has served in the armed forces. All veterans are entitled to suffer no disadvantage from their service and to receive priority access to NHS hospital care for any condition as long as this relates to their service.

All people leaving the armed forces will be given a summary of their health records, which they should give to their new GP when they register.

Registration of close family members / staff

Close family is defined as; *A close family is one in which the members of the family have a strong connection with each other. They keep in touch regularly. Close family members include a persons' spouse, spousal equivalent, parent, dependent / nondependent child, and siblings.*

Where staff members have close family registered at the practice before the start of their employment, they should notify their Line Manager immediately for a risk assessment to be completed. Staff members should not register their close family at the practice they work from.

Staff who do not notify their Line Manager of close family registrations or allow their close family to register may be subject to disciplinary.

The GMC states in paragraph 16(g) of *Good Medical Practice*: "In providing clinical care you must wherever possible, avoid providing medical care to yourself or anyone with whom you have a close personal relationship."

Staff members should also not be registered at the practice they work from. Staff and close family should be encouraged to register at other neighbouring practices.

References

MPS – [Can your practice staff also be your patients? \(medicalprotection.org\)](https://www.medicalprotection.org/uk/for-practitioners/can-your-practice-staff-also-be-your-patients)

East London NHS Foundation Trust Patient Registration Policy -
https://www.elft.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/patient_registration_policy_-_primary_care.pdf