

Responding to requests

All requests for information must be responded to within 20 working days. A fee can be charged when dealing with a request. This will be calculated in accordance with the Act. If a fee is required for information requested, the 20 day timescale can be extended to up to three months.

The Secretary of State has set limits to charges, should the request for information exceed these charges, this Practice does not have to action the request. There may be a charge for information not covered by the Act or for large amounts of information that might not otherwise be disclosed due to the cost.

The Practice is not obliged to comply with vexatious requests or repeated or substantially similar requests from the same person other than at reasonable intervals.

Exemptions

There is a range of exemptions covering personal data, security, formulation of government policy commercial and individual confidentiality. A further absolute exemption is where information is accessible by other means or if the information has been provided in confidence. Other exemptions include information relating to commercial interests and audit functions.

Information Commissioner's Office

The Information Commissioner's Office is an independent public body and reports directly to Parliament. The Commissioner is responsible for implementing the Act.

Further information is available from: www.ico.gov.uk and www.foi.nhs.uk



Freedom of Information Act 2000



Information for Patients

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act, gives the general right of access to all types of recorded information held by the Practice. The intention of the Act is to encourage a spirit of openness and transparency in the NHS and the whole public sector. Our organisation aims to fully support this.

The public have had full access rights from January 2005. This means that far more information will be routinely and freely made available. This is subject to some exemptions, which will be outlined later in this leaflet.

Any individual or organisation can make a request for information. The applicant does not have to explain why this information is requested.

The Act gives the right to:

- Be told if information exists
- Receive information (ideally in the format requested, for example, as a copy or summary or the applicant may ask to inspect a record)



The Publication Scheme

This Practice has developed a publication scheme. It is a guide to information, routinely published and gives indication of information intended to be published. The publication scheme describes the form in which the information is published and any fees that will be charged. A request can be made from information listed in this publication scheme.

The publication scheme can be accessed via the Practice Manager, Mrs Joanne Rowe, or via www.StrensallMedical.com

The main headings in the publication scheme are listed below with a brief summary of some of the information included:

1. Who we are and what we do

- Details of the Practice
- Organisational structures
- Key personnel

2. What we spend and how we spend it

- Funding details
- Charging policies
- Financial management
- Purchaser equipment and supplies

3. What our priorities are and how we are doing

- Practice vision
- Strategic goals
- Annual plans

4. How we make decisions

- Decision making processes
- Records of decisions

5. Our policies and procedures

- Complaints policy
- Confidentiality
- Data protection
- Health and safety

6. Lists and Registers

- Disease register
- Age sex register

7. The services we offer

- Services provided
- Patient information leaflets
- Out of hours arrangements

Request for information

Requests must be in writing (fax is acceptable) and must include the name and address for the correspondence and a clear description of the information requested.

Requests for information should be made to:

*Mrs Joanne Rowe
Strensall Medical Practice
Southfields Road
Strensall
York
YO32 5UA*