

What happens if the letter is sent to the wrong address or someone else sees it?

It is your responsibility to make sure that we have your correct address. If there is someone else in your home with the same name or initials, you need to tell us how you would like the correspondence addressed to make sure you receive it.

I want to receive copies of letters. What do I do now?

You need to complete the consent form contained in this leaflet and hand it to your health professional, or clinic receptionist.

Any queries about the contents of this leaflet should be addressed to your health professional or to the

Information Governance Lead
Queenswood Medical Practice
151 Park Road
London N8 8JD



Copying Letters to Patients

If you want to receive copies of letters written about you between health professionals, you need to read this leaflet.

COPYING LETTERS TO PATIENTS

From April 2004, you, as an NHS patient, can request to receive copies of letters written about you between health professionals and other agencies for example social services. This leaflet explains more about the initiative and also tells you what to do next if you want to receive copies of the letters.

What is this initiative all about?

By copying letters to you, we are giving you more information so that you can understand more about your health and your treatment.

Can't I see letters already?

Yes, you can, under the Data Protection Act 1998. By copying letters to you, we are building on this.

Why do I need to see copies of letters?

The letter will tell you what arrangements have been made or the results of tests and may give you advice on how to manage your condition. Though your clinician may have explained these to you, it is often useful to have this information to refer to and also share with the family. It is not always easy to remember all the information you are given in a brief consultation. If you are uncertain about the contents of a letter, please discuss this at the next appointment with the health professional concerned.

Will there be times when letters can't be copied?

Yes. If the content of the letters could cause harm to the physical or mental well being of a patient, then letters will not be copied to them. This is likely to be very rare.

I am a carer. Can I receive copies of letters about the person I am caring for?

The letter will normally be copied to the patient, but the patient can ask for you, as a carer, to have a copy. If the patient asks for you not to be sent a copy, the professional will follow procedures for deciding what information should be shared with the carer. If you are worried, discuss this with the health professional concerned.

My child is the patient, so who will receive copies of the letters?

Parents of children under 16 may, subject to the approval of the health professional (and the child if they are considered *Gillick* competent*), receive copies of letters by completing this form.

I am under 16 years old. Can I receive copies of the letters?

Yes, if your health professional thinks you have sufficient understanding in relation to your treatment.

More information on this initiative can be found by visiting the NHS Website:
<http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/01/61/64/04016164.pdf>.

**Gillick competent – a child under 16 who has the capacity and understanding to make decisions about their own treatment.*

Please complete the adjacent form using BLOCK CAPITALS.

DECLARATION

Only complete this if you wish to receive copies of correspondence about you.

I have read the leaflet entitled 'Copying Letters to Patients' and understand the terms and conditions of this option. From now, until I authorise you in writing not to, I wish to receive copies of all my letters that originate between health professionals about my care.

Full name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Date of birth : _____

NHS Number (If known): _____

I wish to receive letters as follows (please tick one)

- By post to my home address
 I require letters to be in large print

Signature: _____

Date: _____

This form is not authorised unless it is signed.
Once completed please hand this form to your health professional or clinic receptionist.