Brookside
GROUP PRACTICE
Partners in Healthcare

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Version 2

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 right 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 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

We have a publication scheme which is available on our website. A request can be made from information listed in this publication scheme.
The main points in the scheme are:

- Who we are (details of the practice)
- What we spend and how we spend it (funding details, charging policies for non-NHS services, purchaser equipment and supplies)
- What our priorities are (strategies and plans)
- How we make decisions (decision-making process and records of decisions)

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 request, the 20 day timescale can be extended to up to three months.
The Secretary of State has set limits to charges, if the request for information exceeds 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.

Exemptions

There is a range of exemptions covering personal data, security, and formulation of government policy, commercial and individual confidentiality. A further absolute exemption is where the 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.
Request must be in writing (email and fax acceptable) and must include the name and address for the correspondence and a clear description of the information requested.

Requests for the information should be made to:

The Senior Information Risk Owner
Brookside Group Practice
Brookside close,
Earley
Reading
RG6 7HG
Tel: 0118 966 9333