

ELY BRIDGE SURGERY

Confidentiality Policy

1. Policy overview

The reasons for the Policy:

- all information held at the Practice about patients is confidential, whether held electronically or in hard copy
- other information about the Practice (for example its financial matters) is confidential
- staff will by necessity have access to such confidential information from time to time

The practice regards the confidentiality of patient and staff information as prime importance. As part of staff induction, all staff are trained to ensure that Patient information remains within the confines of the Practice premises. It is important that staff should sign a confidentiality undertaking to ensure the security of patient, practice and personnel information, verbal, written or electronic is protected.

2. Applicability

The policy applies to all employees and Partners, and also applies to other people who work at the Practice e.g. locum GPs, non-employed nursing staff, temporary staff and contractors.

The work of the practice includes access to personal, written and computerised patient information, and at all times this should be treated as confidential and protected from unauthorised disclosure. It is an express condition of employment that no employee may divulge to a person outside of the Practice such information or/and the outward transmission of any such information or data.

3. Procedure

The terms of the Policy:

- all back-up information, graphics, data, statistics, reports, etc, prepared for or obtained as a result of such work and activity is totally confidential to the Practice and must only be used for it's purposes.
- no such information (including Medical Records) may be removed from the Practice premises (other than in the ordinary course of business) without the prior written (and express) authority of the Practice Manager.

- staff must not under any circumstances disclose patient information to anyone outside the Practice, except to other health professionals on a need to know basis, or where the patient has provided written consent
- staff must not under any circumstances disclose other confidential information about the Practice to anyone outside the Practice unless with the express consent of the Practice Manager/Senior Partner
- staff should limit any discussion about confidential information only to those who need to know within the Practice
- Computer and other systems
 - staff must take particular care that confidential information is not transmitted in error by email or over the internet
 - electronic transfer of any confidential information, once approved by the Practice Manager/Senior Partner, must be transmitted via the NHSnet
 - employees may only operate within the areas of their specific duties and the security access of that individual must only be used. Security access used by any other employee's access code is strictly forbidden.
 - access to a computer system is reserved for authorised personnel only.
 - in no instance should any computer owned or leased by the Practice be used for any purpose other than the legitimate work of the Practice.
- staff must be aware of and conform to the requirements of the Caldicott recommendations
- staff who suspect a breach of confidentiality must inform the Practice Manager/Senior Partner immediately
- any breach of confidentiality will be considered as a serious disciplinary offence and may lead to instant termination of employment. Accidental breach will also be regarded as a breach of Practice rules and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- staff remain bound by the requirement to keep information confidential even if they are no longer employed at the Practice