

FAQs - Accessing your Health Records

1. Can I request access to my Health Records?

Yes, as a patient, you can get a copy of your health records digitally from 1 August 2021, through the online portal: <https://westherts.ams-sar.com/>. Click *get started online*, then follow the instructions to set-up your account or *login* if you have an existing account. A user guide is available to help you through the process.

All other requesters should continue to request access to health records in the usual way using the appropriate forms, by email, until 1st September, when you too will be able to apply and receive health records electronically.

2. Is there a fee for making a request?

No, the Trust must provide a copy of the information free of charge. However, the Trust can charge a "reasonable fee" when the request is deemed excessive or repetitive.

3. How long does the Trust have to disclose patient records?

The Trust must respond to your request within one month (*unless advised otherwise by court order*). The Access to Records team will inform you if it is going to take longer than one month.

4. Can I see the progress of my request?

You can track and see the status of your request on the online portal via the *Manage Requests* section. You will also receive emails from the Trust if you need to provide more information for your request. The sender will be "Sars No Reply". You can log in to the portal at any time to check your request and respond to any messages.

5. Will I always receive everything I have asked for?

Not always, in some circumstances the Trust is legally required to withhold all or some of the information held in an individual's health record where;

- the identity of an individual cannot be satisfied by the Trust.
- consent of the individual has not been given, but is legally required.
- it has been judged that supplying the information is likely to cause serious harm to the physical or mental health or condition of the patient or any other person.
- providing access would disclose information relating to or provided by a third party who had not consented to the disclosure. This exemption may not apply where that third party is an NHS health professional involved in the care of the individual.
- a deceased person had indicated that they did not wish information to be disclosed, or the record contains information that the deceased person expected to remain confidential.
- the information may no longer be available.

6. Will I need to provide identification?

Yes. Identification checks are required by the Trust for security, this is to protect your personal data from unauthorised access. Acceptable forms of identification are outlined in the Request form you are submitting.

7. Can I apply for access to my child's health records?

Unless otherwise indicated, children aged 13 or older are usually considered to have the capacity to give or refuse consent to parents or those with parental responsibility requesting access to their health records. A person with parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) can make an application on the behalf of a child only if it shown that the child does NOT have capacity.

A person with appropriate parental responsibility will usually be entitled to access the records of a child who is aged 12 or younger.

8. How will I receive the health records?

When the Trust has completed your request, you'll receive an email from noreply@ams-sar.com. Follow the instructions to download the files. Once downloaded, you are responsible for the confidential, secure storage of the records, and, when they are no longer required, their secure disposal.