

# LOSTOCK HALL MEDICAL CENTRE

## Freedom of Information Policy

### **What is the Act?**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 aims to produce a culture of openness in public bodies, by providing members of the public with the right to access information held. The main purpose behind this is to show how public money is being used.

GP practices, although not government owned, are considered to be “public bodies” for the purposes of this Act. Therefore members of the public (not necessarily patients) can request information from them. This right came into force in 2005.

GP practices are required to make information available via a “publication scheme”. This may be held in paper form or by electronic means. It will include information commonly requested and is available on request.

The practice’s publication scheme follows the model scheme for GP practices approved by the Information Commissioner.

### **FEES**

The information contained in the publication scheme are available at no charge.

In some circumstances, a fee may be charged for the provision of information.

### **How Up To Date is the Information?**

The practice complies with the principles of the Freedom of Information Act, and as such updates the publication scheme document on at least an annual basis, and at other intervals during the year if significant changes occur.

The publication scheme itself will contain the date of the latest update.

### **What Sort of Information is Available?**

- \*Fees and charges
  - \*Format of the publication scheme
  - \*Information held by the practice (with some exceptions)
  - \*How information requests are processed
  - \*Details of the practice, structure, and relationship to the NHS
  - \*Services provided
  - \*Financial and funding information
  - \*Regular publications and public information
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- \*Complaints policies and procedures
  - \*General policies and procedures

Note: Information related to individual / health / clinical records is not available under this legislation. Please contact the surgery for details of access for this purpose under the Data Protection Act. A separate leaflet is available.

## Complaints

If the requestor is dissatisfied with the way in which their request for access under the Act has been handled, or if they wish to appeal against a refusal to release any information requested, they may write in the first instance to the practice manager.

If, after receiving a reply, they remain dissatisfied they may appeal to the Information Commissioner. Details of how to do this will be supplied as part of our reply.

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