

Removal of Patients Policy

Longford Street Medical Centre

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1 Introduction

1.1 Policy statement

This policy details the requirements to consider prior to the removal of a patient from the organisation's list, in line with extant legislation. The reasons for considering removing a patient may include:

- Death of a patient
- Patient moving from the area
- Unable to contact – assumed moved from area
- Patient requesting to move practice
- A breakdown of the patient – doctor relationship

Staff should refer to the legislative documents to always ensure relevance.

Additionally, staff should also refer to any local Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) relating to the registration of patients at Longford Street Medical Centre

1.2 Status

The organisation aims to design and implement policies and procedures that meet the diverse needs of our service and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others, in accordance with the [Equality Act 2010](#). Consideration has been given to the impact this policy might have regarding the individual protected characteristics of those to whom it applies.

This document and any procedures contained within it are non-contractual and may be modified or withdrawn at any time. For the avoidance of doubt, it does not form part of your contract of employment.

1.3 Training and support

The organisation will provide guidance and support to help those to whom it applies to understand their rights and responsibilities under this guidance. Additional support will be provided to managers and supervisors to enable them to deal more effectively with matters arising from this guidance.

Algorithms supporting the management of emergency treatment can be sought within the annexes.

2 Scope

2.1 Who it applies to

This document applies to all employees of the organisation and other individuals performing functions in relation to the organisation such as agency workers, locums, and contractors.

Furthermore, it also applies to clinicians who may or may not be employed by the organisation but who are working under the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS).¹

2.2 Why and how it applies to them

This document will ensure that all personnel are fully aware of their individual responsibilities when removing patients from the organisation list at Longford Street Medical Centre

3 Definition of terms

3.1 PCSE (Primary Care Support England)

The organisation in England that delivers digital, logistical and support services to primary care.

3.2 Deduction

The process of removing a patient from the organisation list

3.3 Ghost patient

Where a patient is “not known” at an address registered with the NHS

3.4 Out of area

Outside the outer boundary for the organisation, as agreed with commissioners

3.5 FP69

Status allocated to patients where there is doubt as to whether the patient resides at registered address.

¹ [Network DES Specification](#)

4 Legislation and governance

The following legislation supports this document:

[The National Health Service \(General Medical Services Contracts\) Regulations 2015 \(Part 2, Para 23-25\)](#)

Reference will also be made to the following guidance:

- NHSE – [Primary Medical Care Policy and Guidance Manual](#)
- GMC – [Ending your professional relationship with a patient](#)
- BMA – [Removing patients from your practice list](#)
- [PCSE](#) – [Deductions, amendments and rejections](#)

5 Death of a patient

5.1 Patients who have died

Where notification is received of a patient death, their record will be deducted from the patient list. Following the death of a patient, the following SOP will be referred to:

Staff will follow the process for deducting the patient following their death on the Emis Web clinical System.

6 Patient moving from practice area

6.1 Choice of GP practice

Where the patient has made a choice to move to another organisation, a notification of deduction will be received from PCSE. Notifications will be acted on in line with [PCSE guidance](#) and the patient deducted from the organisation list.

6.2 Out of area – request to remain registered

Where a patient has moved out of the organisation outer boundary area but wishes to remain registered with the organisation, they may request to do so under the out of area registration scheme [variation to contract](#).

The scheme is voluntary for GP organisations and, as such, continued registration may be refused and the patient will be deducted as per PCSE guidance.

Longford Street Medical Centre does not register out of area patients.

6.3 Prisoners

From February 2022, patients detained within adult and child and young persons' secure estates can register at their place of detention allowing records to transfer via [GP2GP](#).

It is accepted that Longford Street Medical Centre may not be informed of a patient being imprisoned or the length of their sentence but, if this information is provided, the organisation has a duty to act by informing NHS England and moving to deduct the patient from the list.

6.4 Armed forces personnel

Medical care for serving personnel and mobilised reservists is provided for by the Defence Medical Services (DMS). The patient will still be entitled to treatment as a temporary resident should they find themselves residing too far away from a DMS GP.

Where it is known that a patient has joined the armed forces on a full-time basis, Longford Street Medical Centre will inform NHS England and deduct the patient from the organisation list as per PCSE guidance.

Armed forces reservists, who usually retain their civilian role for most of the year, are to remain on the organisation list as they only serve for limited periods of time.

Further information can be sought at the NHS webpage titled [Healthcare for the armed forces community](#).

6.5 Patients who are abroad for more than three months

Where it is known that a patient has been absent from the UK for a period of more than three months, the organisation must exercise caution when deciding to apply to NHS England to have the patient removed from its list.

The organisation should determine if the patient has retained a sufficient connection to the UK to continue to be habitually resident here, thereby justifying that they remain on the practice list. For example, it could be considered inappropriate to remove a patient from the practice list who spends three months abroad but nine months of the year in the UK.

Patients will be referred to [NHS.UK](#) for further guidance relating to eligibility for healthcare.

6.6 Movement of at-risk patients

At Longford Street Medical Centre, Samantha Taylor, Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for ensuring that a register of all at-risk children, young people and adults is maintained, allowing close oversight of this vulnerable group.

7 Patient not contactable – assumed moved

7.1 'Ghost' patients

Where, as part of their normal working, PCSE are made aware that the patient might no longer reside at the registered address, a '[FP69 flag](#)' will be raised on the National Health Application and Infrastructure Services (NHAIS) system and the organisation will be notified via the clinical system.

A member of the Admin team will attempt to contact the patient to confirm their address directly. Where the patient has moved out of area, the patient will be advised to register with an alternative closer organisation and the patient deducted as per PCSE guidance.

Should PCSE not receive any confirmation from Longford Street Medical Centre (via the link) to confirm residence within six months of the FP69 flag being raised, the patient will be removed from the organisation's patient list.

Where a letter is returned to PCSE or the organisation stating that the patient has 'moved abroad' or 'deceased' the appropriate action would be to confirm this status the deduct the patient.

8 Patient requesting to leave the practice

8.1 Patient requests

A patient has the right to request to be removed from the practice list without providing a reason or explaining why they wish to be removed.

The practice will notify NHS England that the patient wishes to leave the list and the patient will be deducted accordingly.

8.2 Patient registering with another practice

NHS England is compelled to deduct a patient from the practice list if the patient registers with another GP practice in the UK.

8.3 End of temporary residence

If a patient has been a temporary resident for three months, they can be deducted from the organisation list (by the organisation) without any further reason being given to NHS England.

9 Irretrievable breakdown in a relationship

9.1 Breakdown in relationships

Where removals due to a breakdown in relationship are considered, the following guidance should be followed where possible and considering each individual circumstances and patient:

In the first instance, the practice will seek to speak to the patient to try and resolve any issues. This may involve a consultation or a meeting. The practice will provide reassurance to the patient about their conditions and address any concerns. Clinicians will not be forced into giving a diagnosis or treatment if they are uncertain.

If the issue persists, despite the above actions, the patient will be written to explaining that even though meetings/discussions have taken place, the situation remains unchanged and there is a risk of a breakdown of the patient/doctor relationship.

Removal from the practice list:

If the situation remains unchanged or deteriorates further, a meeting will take place between partners and management team, if agreed, the patient will be removed from the practice list. The patient will be advised that the doctor/patient relationship has deteriorated to such a degree that there is no longer any trust between parties and the relationship is not viable. The patient will be asked to register with another organisation. A request will be submitted to PCSE for the patient's removal.

The practice will continue to provide treatment to the patient until the patient is removed from the list.

10 Movement and release of records

10.1 How to move patient records

Guidance on the process to follow to release Lloyds George records can be found in policies and procedures. For electronic transfer of records, refer to same.

11 Non-justified reasons for removal

11.1 Complaints

Longford Street Medical Centre will never remove a patient merely because they have made a complaint.

Only in instances of an irretrievable breakdown of a relationship because of complaints should consideration be given to removing a patient from the list and the BMA advises the following:

“Complaints that are a personal attack on members of the practice or that contain clearly unfounded allegations usually show a serious breakdown in the patient-doctor relationship.

It is a breakdown of the relationship rather than a complaint per se that must form the basis of any decision to remove a patient from the list.”

11.2 Medical conditions

Patients will never be removed from the practice list due to the clinical condition from which they are suffering.

11.3 Cost of treatment

It is unacceptable to consider the removal of a patient due to the cost of their treatment. Additional funding may be provided to meet the cost of expensive treatments.

11.4 Age

Whilst some patients may require increased care and treatment due to age, this is not a justifiable reason to remove the patient from the list.

Furthermore, the level of care required is recognised in higher capitation weighting for older patients and normally also in the formula for allocating prescribing budgets.

11.5 Additional non-justified reasons for removal

This organisation will never remove patients on the following grounds:

- Race
- Gender
- Social class
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Appearance
- Disability

11.6 Removing family members

If the behaviour of one patient has led to their removal, this does not mean the removal of other family or household members should automatically follow.

An explicit discussion with other family members, while protecting the patient's confidentiality, should take place.

However, should there be a need to visit any patient at home where the excluded violent or threatening patient resides, to protect the welfare of our staff, we may require removing all family members who are within the household from the list. The process will consider whether it would be reasonable to exclude an entire household from the list following a disagreement with a single family member.

12 Summary

This organisation should, where possible, maintain accurate records of the organisation list although it is understood that in some instances movement of patients is not always notified.

Where the organisation receives notification, we will work alongside our NHS and PCSE colleagues to ensure that any corrections are made.