

RECORDS RETENTION POLICY

The practice will follow the records retention policy set down by the Department of Health. The links to these guidelines are given at the end of the table.

This policy will be reviewed annually or as changes in legislation require.

| Record | Retention period (years) | Comments |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>Accident reports</i> | 10 | Where litigation has been commenced, keep as advised by legal representatives. |
| <i>Accounts</i> - Annual (Final - one set only) | Permanent | |
| <i>Accounts</i> Minor records (pass books; paying-in slips; cheques counterfoils; cancelled/discharged cheques; accounts of petty cash expenditure; travelling and subsistence accounts; minor vouchers; duplicate receipt books and income records. | 6 | |
| <i>Bills, receipts and cleared cheques</i> | 6 | |
| <i>Buildings and engineering works,</i> Inclusive of major projects abandoned or deferred - town and country planning matters and all formal contract documents (e.g. Executed agreements, conditions of contract, specifications, "as built" record drawings and documents on the appointment and conditions of engagement of private buildings and engineering consultants. | | The general principle to be followed in regard to these records is that they should be preserved for the life of the buildings and installations to which they refer. |
| <i>Building records</i> (mortgage, transfers, disposal etc) | Permanent | |
| <i>Cash Books</i> | 6 | The Limitation Act, 1980 |
| <i>CCTV Images</i> | 31 days | Unless retention otherwise justified |
| <i>Clinical Audit records</i> | 5 | |

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| Clinical System patient records | Permanent | Retain indefinitely for the foreseeable future |
| Complaints | 10 | Where litigations has been commenced, keep as advised by legal representatives |
| Computerised records | The recommended minimum retention periods apply to both paper and computerised records, though extra care needs to be taken to prevent corruption or deterioration of the data. Re-recording / migration of data will also need to be considered as equipment and software become obsolete. For guidance, see the Public Record Office guidance, Management and Appraisal of Electronic Records (1998) – see link below | |
| Contracts | 6 | The Limitation Act, 1980 |
| Death Certificates and death Records | 2 | |
| Diaries (office) | 1 | |
| Employment Records – see Personnel files and Payroll records below | | |
| Freedom of Information Act Requests | 3 | |
| Fridge Temperature Records | 1 | |
| Funding data | 6 | |
| Insurance certificates | 40 | |
| Job advertisements | 1 | |
| Job applications and descriptions (following termination of employment) | 3 | |
| Minutes of Meetings | 1 | |
| Out of Hours Records | 3 | Where these are held as part of the clinical system the longer period of retention relating to clinical system records applies. |
| Paper Patient Records | 20 | 20 years after last recording. 10 years after death. For patients treated under the Mental Health Act retain for 30 years after last recording. NB when a patient changes practice the paper notes are transferred to the new practice via the NHS. The electronic records are however retained for our records. |

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| Payroll / PAYE records | 10 | For superannuation purposes authorities may wish to retain such records until the subject reaches benefit age. Retain for 10 years after termination of employment |
| Personnel files (e.g. Personal files, letters of appointment, contracts references & related correspondence) | 6 | Keep for 6 years after subject of file leaves service, or until subject's 70 th birthday, whichever is the later. Only the summary needs to be kept to age 70; remainder of file can be destroyed 6 years after subject leaves service. |
| Significant Event records | 3 | |
| Superannuation Forms (SD55) | 10 | |
| VAT Records | 6 | Complete years following the end of a VAT period |

Links for further information and guidance:

DoH guidance on records retention:

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/01/18/15/04011815.pdf>

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/13/31/97/04133197.pdf>

The Medical Protection Society recommend that any records not specifically mentioned elsewhere should be retained for at least 10 years after conclusion of treatment, the patient's death or after the patient has permanently left the country.

Business Link guidance on **employment** records retention

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=RESOURCES&itemId=1074450470>