

A large, dark teal graphic on the left side of the page, composed of several concentric, semi-circular arcs of varying thicknesses, resembling a stylized smile or a series of overlapping bands.

# Copying Clinical Letters: Guidelines for patients

General information

**A guide for patients and carers**



## Introduction

The NHS are committed to giving patients copies of clinicians' letters about them.

From October 2018, patients will automatically receive copies of clinical letters about them. In the case of a child, a parent / guardian will receive a copy of the letters. We hope that this leaflet will help you decide if you want to receive a copy of your letters and what to do if you choose not to.

Should you decide not to receive copies, you can change your mind at any time.

## What kind of letters will I receive?

We will send you copies of any letters sent from The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre to your GP, to any other hospital doctors or to outside agencies, following a consultation with your cancer doctor. You will not receive test results such as blood tests.

## What are the benefits for me?

The Department of Health has identified the following potential benefits:

- More trust between patients and clinicians
- Patients have a better understanding of their condition and how they can help themselves
- Patients are more informed and more able to make decisions about treatment options



- Patients who understand the reasons for following advice are more likely to comply
- More accurate demographic records. For example, any address or date of birth errors can be spotted and corrected by the patient
- Patients are better prepared for their treatment and less anxious
- The letters reinforce advice on self-care and lifestyles

## Are there any reasons I would not receive clinical letters?

An exception may be if the doctor or healthcare professional feels it is not in your best interests to receive the information contained within the letter (your cancer doctor will discuss this with you).

## Why would I choose not to receive the letters?

### **Some considerations include:**

- You do not want written information about your illness - there may be information in the letter that could upset you
- You believe you have sufficient information
- You have problems with privacy at home and do not want other members of your family to know about your illness

## What if I need the information in a different format?

If letters are not suitable, please inform us and we will endeavour to provide the information in another way, such as an audio recording, large print or a different language.

## What to do next:

**I want a copy:** If you decide you want a copy of your clinical letters, you do not need to do anything.

You will continue to receive correspondence until you advise us that you no longer wish to receive it.

If you change your address, you must inform your cancer doctor's secretary.

**I don't want a copy:** If you decide you don't want a copy of your letters, you can let us know using the consent form in this booklet.

Forms can also be obtained from clinic receptions or by downloading a copy from the "Your Rights – Our Responsibilities" section of The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre website.

**Under the Data Protection Act 1998 you can also request a copy of your medical records. Please visit [www.clatterbridgecc.nhs.uk](http://www.clatterbridgecc.nhs.uk) for more details. If you require more detailed information, please read the section on our website "Access to Medical Records".**



## Copies of Clinical Letters - Opt Out Form

The NHS are committed to giving patients copies of clinicians' letters about them.

From October 2018 patients will automatically receive copies of clinical letters about them. In the case of a child, a parent /guardian will receive a copy of the letters.

However, should you decide you don't want to receive the letters, please complete and return this form to tell us to STOP sending copies of clinical letters to you.

### **Reasons for not receiving copies may include:**

- You do not want written information about your illness - there may be information in the letter that could upset you
- You believe you have sufficient information
- You have problems with privacy at home and do not want other members of your family to know about your illness

Your name (please print)\_\_\_\_\_

Your date of birth\_\_\_\_\_

Your hospital number (if known)\_\_\_\_\_

Your address\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your telephone number\_\_\_\_\_

Your cancer doctor\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_

**Return this form to your cancer doctor's secretary  
at the address on the last page of this leaflet.**

**Please contact The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre if  
you wish to start receiving your copy letters again.**

**If you require more detailed information or require  
copies of your case notes, please read the section  
on our website "Access to Medical Records".**



## How we produce our information

All of our leaflets are produced by staff at The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre and this information is not sponsored or influenced in any way. Every effort is made to ensure that the information included in this leaflet is accurate and complete and we hope that it will add to any professional advice you have had. All our leaflets are evidence based where appropriate and they are regularly reviewed and updated. If you are concerned about your health in any way, you should consult your healthcare team.

We rely on a number of sources to gather evidence for our information. All of our information is in line with accepted national or international guidelines where possible. Where no guidelines exist, we rely on other reliable sources such as systematic reviews, published clinical trials data or a consensus review of experts. We also use medical textbooks, journals and government publications.

References for this leaflet can be obtained by telephoning 0151 556 5570.

If you need this leaflet in large print, Braille, audio or different language, please call 0151 556 5570.

**If you have a comment, concern, compliment or complaint, please call 0151 556 5203.**

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