

Heathgate Medical Practice
Policy statement
Patients residing outside the Practice area

GP Practices in England offer services to patients who have their main residence within the designated Practice area agreed with the local NHS healthcare commissioner. Our Practice area is confirmed on our website.

In January 2015, NHS England established a scheme where Practices could choose to accept the registration of patients living outside their designated Practice area. This is a voluntary scheme and at their discretion. Practices participating in the scheme are under no obligation to provide some services (such as home visits) to patients living outside their designated Practice area. Heathgate Medical Practice is not participating in the 'out of area' scheme.

With local residential development, our registered patient list continues to grow. This coupled with more complex healthcare needs, an ageing population, new national services delivered locally and increased patient expectations, has meant we have needed to regularly review our provision of services so that we remain safe and effective.

We have increased our clinical and non-clinical teams in response to this but to ensure we can continue to offer the level of service we aim to provide to those that live locally, the Partners have agreed that when patients move away from our Practice area, they should follow the national recommendation and re-register with a Practice nearer to their home.

The NHS website below provides patients (based on their home post code), details of their nearest GP Surgery.

[Find a GP - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

We are aware that some Practices in Norfolk are limiting registrations, but NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB (the local healthcare commissioner) has a response to this, and the Practices concerned should provide patients, where restrictions on registration are in place, how to complete the registration process.

Most GP records are now held electronically and the transfer of detailed medical records between Practices is a much smoother nationally driven process. There may be a value, in more complex cases, for a handover between clinicians and we are happy to talk to patients about this. This could involve a discussion or communication between us and a named clinician at the new Practice.

Some patients are concerned about continuity of their medication when moving Practices and we will support this by offering the supply of two months repeat medication in the period directly before re-registration.

There could be exceptional circumstances (palliative care, mental health or new significant diagnoses) where the Practice may agree to hold a patient's registration after they have moved home, but this will be for a maximum period of two months. Ongoing treatment at other healthcare providers (such as the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital) is not a reason to remain registered with the GP Practice.

On 1st August 2022, we will be completing an audit of patients that appear to have moved away from our Practice area and ask them to re-register with a new local Practice. The request will be made in writing providing them with a timeline of 8 weeks to complete their re-registration. If this is not completed or we have not had contact from the patient, we will ask Primary Care Services England (the registration authority for GP patient records) to deduct the patient from our patient list.

After 1st August 2022, when we become aware of additional patients living outside our Practice area, we will add them to an 'out of Practice area' register, advise they should re-register and follow this up after 4 weeks to check they have done so. If they have not, we will formally write to them with a re-registration request within the next 4 weeks. After that period, we will ask Primary Care Services England (the registration authority for GP patient records) to deduct the patient from our patient list.

We are aware there are some historic non-specific verbal agreements with patients remaining registered with us based on local agreements with former clinicians that will require careful management, considering the individual situation.

However, the Practice policy going forward is clear, fair and transparent. Our expectation is that patients moving to live outside our Practice area will be asked to re-register with their local GP surgery.

This policy will be published on our Practice website on the registration page.

Policy agreed at a Partners Business Meeting
For review no later than

22nd July 2022
22nd July 2023