



Data Protection Policy

Introduction

At Patient Focus Ireland privacy and data protection rights are very important to us.

Patient Focus is registered under the **Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003** as a data controller and data processor and all personal data will be maintained in accordance with the obligations of that Act.

Data Protection is the safeguarding of the privacy rights of individuals in relation to the processing of personal data, in both paper and electronic format. The Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 (the “Data Protection Acts”) lay down strict rules about the way in which personal data and sensitive personal data are collected, accessed, used and disclosed. The Data Protection Acts also permit individuals to access their personal data on request, and confer on individuals the right to have their personal data amended if found to be incorrect.

This document outlines Patient Focus Ireland’s policy to help ensure that we comply with the Data Protection Acts.

This document also outlines and ensures our commitment to adhering to the new **European General Data Protection Directive that will be applicable in Ireland from the 25th May 2018.**

Enquiries about this Data Protection Policy should be made to: **Brigid Doherty, CEO, Patient Focus, Sky Business Centre, Plato Business Park, Damastown, Dublin 15.**

Data Protection Policy

Purpose of this policy

This policy is a statement of Patient Focus Ireland's commitment to protect the rights and privacy of individuals in accordance with the Data Protection Acts.

Individuals' Responsibilities

Any staff member of Patient Focus who is involved in the collection, storage or processing of personal data has responsibilities under the legislation:

Any staff member involved in the processing/storing of personal data should make sure;

- to obtain and process personal data fairly.
- to keep such data only for explicit and lawful purposes.
- to disclose such data only in ways compatible with these purposes
- to keep such data safe and secure.
- to keep such data accurate, complete and up-to-date.
- to ensure that such data is adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- to retain such data for no longer than is necessary for the explicit purpose.
- to give, on request, a copy of the data to the individual to whom they relate, such a request is known as an access request

Any data access requests received should be forwarded immediately to the CEO, Mrs. Brigid Doherty.

Individual Rights

The individuals for whom Patient Focus stores personal data have the following rights:

- to have their personal data obtained and processed fairly
- to have personal data kept securely and not illegitimately disclosed to others.
- to be informed of the identity of the Data Controller and of the purpose for which the information is held.
- to get a copy of their personal data.
- to have their personal data corrected or deleted if inaccurate.
- to prevent their personal data from being used for certain purposes: for example, one might want to have the data blocked for research purposes where it is held for other purposes.
- under Employment Rights, not to be forced to disclose information to a prospective employer. No one can force another person to make an access request, or reveal the results of an access request, as a condition of recruitment, employment or provision of a service. Where vetting for employment purposes is necessary, this can be facilitated where the individual gives consent to the data controller to release personal data to a third party.
- It should be noted that under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, records containing personal information may be released to a third party, where the public interest so requires.

Principles of the Acts

Patient Focus will administer its responsibilities under the legislation in accordance with the eight stated data protection principles outlined in the Act as follows:

1. Obtain and process information fairly.

Patient Focus will obtain and process personal data fairly and in accordance with the fulfilment of its functions as an Irish National Patient Advocacy Service.

2. Keep data only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes.

Patient Focus will keep data for purposes that are specific, lawful and clearly stated and the data will only be processed in a manner compatible with these purposes.

3. Use and disclose data only in ways compatible with these purposes.

Patient Focus will only disclose personal data that is necessary for the purpose/s or compatible with the purpose/s for which it collects and keeps the data, namely as a National Patient Advocacy Service.

4. Keep data safe and secure.

Patient Focus will take appropriate security measures against unauthorised access to, or alteration, disclosure or destruction of, the data and against their accidental loss or destruction. Patient Focus is aware that high standards of security are essential for all personal data. Patient focus will keep their computer and paper security systems up to date at all times.

5. Keep data accurate, complete and up-to-date.

Patient Focus will have procedures that are adequate to ensure high levels of data accuracy. Patient Focus will examine the general requirement to keep personal data up-to-date. Patient Focus will put in place appropriate procedures to assist staff in keeping data up-to-date.

6. Ensure that data are adequate, relevant and not excessive.

Personal data held by Patient Focus will be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose/s for which it is kept.

7. Retain data for no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes for which they are kept.

Patient Focus will not keep personal data for longer than is necessary. Patient Focus will retain the Personal data from once off contacts/clients for a period of **1 year**. The personal data relating to all other clients will be retained for a period of **3 years** after final contact is made with an individual. In certain circumstances Patient Focus may feel it is necessary to retain data for longer than the above stated periods. In such circumstances the rationale for this decision will be documented.

8. Give a copy of his/her personal data to that individual, on request

Patient Focus will have procedures in place to ensure that data subjects can exercise their rights under the Data Protection legislation.

Roles/Responsibilities of Patient Focus

Patient Focus has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Data Protection legislation. However, all employees of Patient Focus who collect and/or control the contents and use of personal data are also responsible for compliance with the Data Protection legislation. Patient Focus will provide support, assistance, advice and training to all its staff ensure it is in a position to comply with the legislation.

Procedures and Guidelines

This policy supports the provision of a structure to assist in Patient Focus' compliance with the Data Protection legislation, including the provision of best practice guidelines and procedures in relation to all aspects of Data Protection.

The New EU General Data Protection Regulation

Patient Focus is dedicated to complying with the new EU Data Protection Regulation that will be applicable from the 25th day of May 2018.

1. In particular, Patient Focus will designate a Data Protection officer who will oversee the processing and retention of personal data.
2. Patient Focus will ensure that all individuals' explicit consent is obtained prior to obtaining and processing his/her personal data.
3. Patient Focus will establish a culture of monitoring, reviewing and assessing the personal data that they hold.
4. Patient Focus will keep a written/electronic record of all of the personal data they hold.
5. Where an individual's personal data has been breached (i.e. been obtained by an unauthorised individual/entity), Patient Focus will notify the Data Protection Commissioner without delay.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed regularly in light of any legislative or other relevant indicators.