



NHS Direct charging for information regimes.

Charges for information falling under the Data Protection Act.

A £10 fee is payable if the records are older than 40 days- this relates to both requests for patient data, and for corporate data such as HR records.

Senior managers have the right to exempt applicants from charges for medical records requests under special circumstances

Charges for information falling under the Freedom of Information Act.

Wherever possible NHS Direct will not charge for information provided under the Freedom of Information Act. However the following exceptions apply.

- Public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates that the cost of determining if it holds the relevant information, locating and retrieving the information and, where necessary, extracting the information from a document would exceed the appropriate limit set down under section 12 of the Act. The appropriate limit has been set as a figure of £450 for public authorities. This figure is calculated at a rate of £25 per hour and therefore any request that exceeds 18 hours of work will normally be rejected. Wherever possible NHS Direct will work with the enquirer to try to reduce the amount of work involved so that some of the information can be provided. In certain circumstances NHS Direct can offer the enquirer the option of paying for the information. In this instance the enquirer would have to pay the full cost, not just the amount over and above £450.
- Under the Freedom of Information Act, public bodies can charge for what are called disbursements- this covers more administrative tasks such as photocopying/translation of documents etc. In most circumstances NHS Direct waive these charges, however they reserve the right to utilise them in exceptional instances where an FOI request requires an uncommonly large amount of photocopying, or substantial translation/transition of documents into other formats. If disbursements are charged they will be kept to a reasonable level.