

Advance Payment Scheme – Guide to obtaining a ‘supporting document’

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About this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide information for people considering applying to the Advance Payment Scheme about how to obtain ‘a supporting document’ – some kind of ‘record’ which shows you spent time in care in Scotland as a child.

We would always suggest that in the first instance, you contact the Advance Payment Team on 0808 169 9740 to discuss your individual circumstances. We have learned that a conversation with one of our advisors is the best first step to exploring the most likely and effective routes to obtaining a ‘supporting document’. Our team have worked with hundreds of applicants since 2019, they understand the many different issues that can come up in the application process and are sensitive to the needs of applicants.

The guide is one of a series of information documents for the Advance Payment Scheme. Please make sure you read the other documents (application form, frequently asked questions and privacy notice) to find out if the Advance Payment Scheme is for you, how to apply and why you need a supporting document for your application.

Important - This guide **is not** about the financial redress scheme proposed in the legislation currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament. The details of that scheme, including what evidence will be required, will not be finalised until the parliamentary process is complete (expected to complete before the end of this Parliamentary term in March 2021, subject to parliamentary approval)

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Background

The Advance Payment Scheme has been in place for 18 months, and so far 518 applicants have received payments (at November 2020). To date, all of our eligible applicants have been able to find some kind of 'supporting document' or 'record' to show that they were in care –sometimes even if they had been unable to do so in the past.

Since the Scheme opened, some applicants have told us that they are happy to try to find a supporting document on their own, or with the help of friends or family - if this applies to you then this guide provides some useful information to help you. However, we know this is not the case for everyone – finding supporting documents and records can be difficult, frustrating and whether records are found or not, it can be upsetting. We at the Advance Payment Team understand this and can help. We are here to talk through options, answer any questions, and, if you wish, link you in with organisations that can help with finding records as well as offering emotional support. We will respect your privacy and follow guidelines on confidentiality regarding any information that you share with us. Applicants have told us how much they have valued our help and support and we would always prefer that you make contact with us early in the process to discuss the options that might be available for you.

IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE -

- **Applications to The Advance Payment Scheme only require one document showing you were in care – fuller records are not necessary.**
- **This guide provides information to help you understand the process involved but it does not mean that you need to take things forward on your own**
- **You do not need to try to find records or make contact with organisations on your own – support and advice is available and we would always prefer you get in touch with us first**
- **If you choose to request your full records, we would strongly recommend that you contact the Advance Payment Team to discuss the supports available (see section 'More than a piece of paper' – what about support?)**
- **Covid – 19 public health restrictions means there are currently challenges for some organisations getting access to records they hold and requests are taking longer than usual - but we will do everything we can to support you to access the documents you need**

What is a 'supporting document'?

The Advance Payment Scheme is for survivors of abuse in care in Scotland when the abuse took place before December 2004. It does not matter if you no longer live in Scotland. All applications require a 'supporting document' to show that the person applying was in care in Scotland as a child. There are lots of different kinds of

supporting documents which might show this. It is typically a copy of a 'paper record' of some kind but it does not always have to be from the organisation that provided your care. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- a copy of a document from your care records held by your care provider, such as an entry in an admission/discharge register or a log book. These may be held by your care provider or local authority archivists.
- local authority records, including social work and education records
- records that show your 'in care' address at the time, such as
 - a baptism record or some other documentation which details your address 'in care' at the time.
 - court or police records
 - health records including primary medical records (e.g., GP, dental, ophthalmic, or pharmacy) as well as secondary care records (e.g., hospital or clinic).

Further information on supporting documents can be found in the Advance Payments FAQ and in this Guide.

More than a piece of paper - what about support?

We recognise that any records relating to your time in care are very significant to you. Records are a vital link with the past, and are about you, your childhood and your circumstances. Getting no or very little information can be equally as difficult as getting lots of information.

Although only one supporting document is required as evidence for the Advance Payment Scheme, some survivors will choose to access their full records at the time of applying or at another date. Some survivors tell us that when full records have been accessed, they have discovered things about themselves or their families for the first time. For some it can be difficult to make sense of what is received, sometimes redactions add to this problem (redaction is where information about other people is removed from the document sent to you) and for others it has filled in some gaps in their understanding. **We encourage you to call us on 0808 169 9740 to talk through the process, your choices and about the support that is available.**

I was in care a long time ago, what about my records?

Accessing records is a very personal journey, and where and how you will find your record will also be individual to you, as well as deciding when the right time is to do this. Remember that to make application to the Advance Payment Scheme only requires a 'supporting document' **It will be helpful to talk through your unique circumstances with an advisor from the Advance Payment Team before you begin your search for a 'supporting document' to evidence your time in care**

Over the years there have been different rules and guidance in place for retaining and storing care and other records. We know that historically a lack of resources, regulation and available expertise led to many records being lost or destroyed and at times in line with the guidance at the time. This means that the quality and availability of personal records varies.

More recently, requirements about how to keep records, how they are managed and stored, how long they should be kept and who is responsible for records have improved, particularly since the introduction of The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011.

Your circumstances, the time period you were in care and the particular care setting you were in will all be factors on what records can be found. Sometimes it can be difficult to get even basic information to show you were in care and at other times, when individuals are seeking full records – they can receive a great deal of information.

Finding a supporting document – an overview of key steps

Personal records include sensitive information and there are rules and regulations to make sure the right information goes to the right person (you can find out more about your rights to ask for personal information and how that process works at the [Information Commissioners Website here https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/your-right-to-get-copies-of-your-data/](https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/your-right-to-get-copies-of-your-data/)). In general there are a number of key steps to finding and obtaining a supporting document:

- 1. Identify the main organisations which might be most likely to hold a record of your time in care.** This will be the organisation that ran the care setting (local authority, faith-based/religious or third sector organisation) and the organisation responsible for placing you in care (e.g. a Local Authority or Court).

Sometimes there might not be care records, but your name might be on a Social Work Register or Education Register. The care organisation or the local authority are likely to be your best first options. If you have tried and have had no success, please call us. You might want to think about other options such as Police or Health records -we have provided more information below.

- 2. You have a choice to make**
 - a) do you, for the time being, only want to obtain one supporting document for the purpose of the Advance Payment Scheme?**

OR

- b) do you want access to all personal information held about your time in care (including that for the purpose of the Advance Payment Scheme)?**

a) If you only want **one supporting document**, then please make that clear in your request to the organisation/s when you contact them. Asking for one supporting document may reduce the time that it takes an organisation to get back to you. It can also be helpful to let them know that you want the document for the purposes of an Advance Payment.

b) If you request **all personal information held** from an organisation and there are a number of records for you, sometimes these will have to be 'redacted' (information about a third party is removed). This can take a bit longer to get the information that you need. You can always ask for fuller personal information at a later date. Please remember if you are to receive some detailed information about your time in care, this might be upsetting and we would like to remind you about the support available to help you with this.

- 3. Make a request in writing, either by letter or email, for your personal information to the organisation(s) that may hold a record about your time in care.** This request for your personal information is called a 'Subject Access Request' or a SAR. The main care providers and all local authorities are aware of the Advance Payment Scheme and their role in helping survivors find one supporting document in order to apply. This means it is helpful for you to highlight if this is the purpose of your request (See bullet point 2a) and 2b) above)
- 4. If you intend to contact a Local Authority to ask for a supporting document, please contact the Advance Payment Team.** We have a template letter that has been agreed with local authorities for the purpose of Advance Payments. The template is designed to help you provide the right information and make the process easier.
- 5. If you are not sure who to contact or you need contact details please get in touch with the Advance Payment Team**
- 6. Provide as much information as you can in your request.** At a minimum you will need to provide your name, any name that you were previously known by, your date of birth and details of where and the dates (approximate dates if not known) you were in care. As social work records in particular are sometimes stored under different family members' names, it is also helpful if you can provide the names of any siblings or family members who might also have had a care record or who had been placed in care with you. A subject access search will be conducted by an organisation based on the information you provide only, so please provide as much detail as you can when making a subject access request.
- 7. For security purposes, you may be asked to provide identification to verify that the sensitive personal data you are requesting is about you.**

Please contact the Advance Payment Team on 0808 169 9740 if any of the process is unclear, if you have any further questions or difficulties or, if you

would like to be referred to an organisation that can help you with the process of obtaining a supporting document.

Establish where your care records might be held

A number of different voluntary, faith-based or local authority run organisations provided care for children over the years. Sometimes this involved a group living setting or a child being 'fostered' or 'boarded out' to a family. It might be called a children's home, a residential school, a List D School, Borstal, Approved School or Secure Unit. Sometimes the same establishment, or home, could be run by different organisations over time. Some of those establishments and organisations no longer exist. Children could sometimes move across a number of establishments over many years, some care settings existed over decades but changed hands - it can understandably be confusing for those seeking records.

If you are not sure who to contact, please get in touch with the Advance Payment Team for further advice or support.

Care settings and records held by the local authority

The local authority may have been the placing authority (made the arrangements) or run and managed the residential care setting, in the same way as a voluntary organisation or faith-based organisation. Sometimes local authority boundaries have changed over the years and you might be unsure what that means for where your records are stored. The Advance Payment Team can offer up to date advice and contact details for local authorities. We have worked with local authority and social work representatives to design a form and a process that might help you in your request for records. **Please contact the Advance Payment Team to check your local authority details and to request a form.**

Social Work and Education Records that show you were in care

A local authority may have a record showing you spent time in care as a child, even if they did not run the home that you stayed in or they moved you to different area. In summary:

- **The local authority that made arrangements to place you in care** (sometimes called the placing authority and is the authority area where you lived when you were first placed in care) might have records reflecting the arrangements that were made and information on your circumstances around that time.
- **The local authority that 'hosted' your care home** (the area where the care home was located), even if the care home was owned and run by a voluntary

or faith- based (religious) organisation and you had ongoing social work involvement in a different area.

- **Education registers, organisational records as well as personal care records** – can sometimes be found in the authority where the care home was based.

Please note: In some cases this might mean that you have two local authorities to contact – the one that organised your care and the one where the care home was based.

Care records from children's homes

Catholic Religious Orders

Over time, a number of male and female Catholic Religious Orders provided and managed residential homes, for example the Christian Brothers, Daughters of Charity or Sisters of Nazareth. If your care home was run by a Catholic Religious Order, the Order itself may have records relating to your time there. If available, the type of information can vary. Sometimes there might be a bit of detail or in many cases simply a record of your admission, discharge or if it exists - a baptism record or first communion record that may show the address you were in care. Some religious orders have their own archives and staff who will search for information regarding your time in care. Again, some religious orders ran establishments over decades and many a very long time ago. Some are better placed than others in terms of the availability of records and the arrangements in place. Often, a Religious Order will summarise the information they have in a letter to you, rather than send a copy of any documents or registers (a summary letter is acceptable for the Advance Payment Scheme). For further information about Approved Schools or List D Schools, please see that section.

Please get in touch with the Advance Payment Team on 0808 169 9740 if you would like to discuss a particular Religious Order, if you do not know who the Order was, or if the Order has told you that they are unable to provide any information about your time in care.

Care records from voluntary and third sector organisations

Many of the large national charities and voluntary organisations that provided care services have their own archives and staff who can help you to find information regarding your time in their care. Requests should be in writing, by letter or by email, sometimes via a form on-line using the contact details below. Phone contact details are provided where available, should you wish to discuss the process to access your records with the relevant organisation.

Aberlour Child Care Trust: Complete their online form via this link that is then submitted online:

Online: <https://www.aberlour.org.uk/access-your-records/>
Address: Aberlour Child Care Trust, 36 Park Terrace, Stirling, FK8 2JR
Email: enquiries@aberlour.org.uk
Phone: 0800 085 6150

Action for Children: also formally known as National Children's homes (Methodist). Download, complete and either post or email an 'access to records' request form that is available online:

Online: <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/what-we-do/help-if-you-were-formerly-in-our-care/access-to-records///>
Email: atr@actionforchildren.org.uk
Address: Action for Children, Access to Records Service, 231 Camberwell New Road, Camberwell, SE5 0TH
Phone: 0207 701 1144

Barnardos: Download, print, complete and either post or email their 'Making Connections Enquiry Form' that is available online:

Online: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/former-barnardos-children>
Email: makingconnections@barnardos.org.uk
Address: Making Connections, Barnardo's, 140 Balaam Street, London, E13 8RD
Phone: 0208 552 1004

Children 1st: (also formally known as the Royal Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (RSPCC): Download and complete their 'subject access request form' which can be returned by post or email::

Online: <https://www.children1st.org.uk/who-we-are/about-children-1st/contact-us/historical-records/>
Email: cfs@children1st.org.uk
Write: F.A.O. Information Governance Officer, Children 1st, 83 Whitehouse Loan, Edinburgh, EH9 1AT, marking the envelope 'Private and Confidential'.
Phone: 0131 446 2300

CrossReach (sometimes known as Church of Scotland homes): If you were in a care home run by the Church of Scotland, you can make a request in writing to CrossReach. This can be done by completing their form online. You can also contact them by telephone, email or by post if you have any queries:

Online: <https://www.crossreach.org.uk/contact-us>
Address: CrossReach, Charis House, 47 Milton Road East, Edinburgh, EH15 2SR
Email: info@crossreach.org.uk
Phone: 0131 657 2000

Dean and Cauvin Young People's Trust: Email or write to the Trust.

Online: <https://www.deanandcauvin.org.uk/>
Email: pamelak@deanandcauvin.org.uk
Write: Dean and Cauvin Young People's Trust, 68 St Johns Road, Corstorphine, Edinburgh, EH12 8AT
Phone: 0131 316 4994

Kibble: Download and complete their 'subject access request form' which can be returned by post or email:

Online: https://www.kibble.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Subject_Access_Request_Form.doc
Email: Information&Records@kibble.org
Write: Information & Records Officer, Kibble Education and Care Centre, Goudie Street, Paisley, PA3 2LG
Phone: 0141 889 0044

Rossie: Download and complete their 'subject access request' form which can be returned by post or email:

Online: <http://www.rossie.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/FOI5-Subject-Access-Request-Form.pdf>
Email: info@rossie.org.uk
Write: Service Manager, Management Support, Rossie, Montrose, DD1 9TS
Phone: 01674 820204

RSPCC (In more recent years, the Royal Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (RSPCC) changed their name to Children 1st): Children 1st should be contacted to arrange access to all former RSPCC files. Refer above for the contact details for Children 1st.

The Sailors' Society - Lagarie : Contact their Aftercare and Safeguarding Team:

Address: Aftercare and Safeguarding Team, Sailors' Society, Seafarer House, 74 St Annes Road, Southampton, SO19 9FF
Email: Lagarie@sailors-society.org
Phone: 07565 903377

Lagarie was open from 1949 – 1982. Unfortunately, records are limited but they do have some organisation records, some organisational magazines and reports where occasionally a child/family might be mentioned. If you lived here and were of school age at the time, your name may be on a primary or secondary school register. It is best if you phone the Advance Payment Team to discuss your circumstances.

Quarriers: A records request can be made by completing the 'records enquiry' form available online or by writing via email or post:

Online: <https://quarriers.org.uk/about-us/aftercare/>
Address: Quarriers, Safeguarding and Aftercare Team, Quarriers Head Office,
Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir, PA11 3SX
Email: safeguarding@quarriers.org.uk
Phone: 01505 616120

I was in care in a smaller voluntary home/ or I am not certain who ran the home?

If you were in a care home not run by one of these large voluntary organisations, or if you are not sure who ran the care home, **please contact us on 0808 169 9740**. A number of care homes were established by smaller trusts or organisations that changed over time. We might be able to think through with you some possible options for you to consider.

A note about List D Schools, Borstals or Approved Schools

The words used to describe children's homes and residential schools have changed over time. Residential care settings could be called residential schools, List D Schools, Borstals or Approved Schools. A child could be placed in these settings for a range of different reasons relating to care, protection or as a result of running away, truancy or on offence grounds. The 1968 Social Work (Scotland) Act led to many Approved Schools in Scotland being re-designated as 'List D' Schools. Many of these establishments were still run by voluntary or religious organisations. However, Dundee, Midlothian, Glasgow and Paisley local authorities ran their own List D schools.

If you were in an Approved or List D School, you may have a number of options to explore in order to establish which, if any, records might show that you were in care. Again, your most likely first contacts would be the organisation that ran the setting – that could have been a local authority, a faith-based organisation, a third sector organisation or the local authority that made the arrangements for your care. If you cannot get a record, then there are other organisations that may have a record or a document that shows your address as being the care setting. Other contacts include (refer to the sections below for specific contact details for each):

- The Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service;
- Police Scotland;
- The Scottish Prison Service;
- The Scottish Children's Reporters Administration;
- The Scottish Government;
- National Records of Scotland;
- The NHS.

Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service

A juvenile court may have created records of children referred to an Approved School and some Sheriff Courts may have created and maintained Probation Order registers. However, similar to other historical records, there was no clear requirement for records to be kept, so these are not routinely available and their existence is mixed. It can also be difficult to establish which Sheriff Court may have heard your case, as it may not have been local to where you lived at the time. You may want to contact the Advance Payment Team in the first instance, but if you want to make contact with them yourself, you can either email or use their contact form online:

Online: <https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/about-the-scottish-court-service/contact-us/data-protection>
Email: dpo@scotcourts.gov.uk

Police Scotland

If you were in care as a result of having committed offences, or if you committed offences while in care, Police Scotland may have a record of the offences, with your address noted and any disposal that you received at court. Please note that information can be held on the Scottish Criminal Records System (CHS) and also the Police National Computer (PNC). The computerisation of the CHS system happened in the late 1980s and information may be retained on one system but not the other. **Please remember to ask for both records systems (CHS and PNC) to be checked when you are submitting a subject access request.**

Alternatively, if you have previously reported abuse within the care setting to police, Police Scotland may hold a record of this. Please note, Police Scotland regularly deletes information from systems like CHS/PNC and other Police Scotland systems/files in line with their retention policies. This means that some information might no longer be available and can depend on a number of things such as the type of offence, when it happened, how long it has been on record and the age of the offender. You can contact Police Scotland and ask for any information that they may hold on you. An application form and guidance can be downloaded from Police Scotland here:

Online: <http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/data-protection/subject-access-requests>
Phone: If you need any further advice or guidance, please call 101 and ask to speak to the Information Management team in your local area.

The Scottish Prison Service

The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) may have records if you spent time in prison or Borstal. The availability of records depends on the type of personal data being processed and the retention and destruction policies specified by the Scottish Prison Service. To request access to prison or Borstal records you should make a subject access request to the Scottish Prison Service. You can download a subject access

request form and find out further information here on the Scottish Prison Service Website

Online:

https://www.sps.gov.uk/Corporate/Information/Your_Private_Information.aspx.

The Scottish Children's Reporters Administration (SCRA)

Sometimes referred to as the 'Children's Hearing System' or the 'Children's Panel'. This was established in 1971, provided Scotland with a unique system for the care and protection of children and young people and has since been modernised by further legislation. There are now two public bodies, Children's Hearing Scotland (CHS) and Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA). Individual care records are held by SCRA up until a child's 18th birthday (social work reports, statutory documents etc) and copies of most of these same documents should also be available in your case file at the relevant local authority that made arrangements for your care. **Please note - given the criteria for an Advance Payment is that applicants will have experienced abuse in care before 2004 it is more likely that your records will be available at the relevant local authority and you are advised to contact them in the first instance.**

Email: inforequest@scra.gov.uk

Write: SCRA, Ochil House, Springkerse Business Park, Stirling, FK7 7XE

Phone: 0131 244 8600

The Scottish Government

You will always be best, in the first instance, to contact the organisation or local authority that organised and/or provided your care. See the previous sections. This is because the Scottish Government tends to hold records that will relate to the development of policy and regulation of certain services run or managed by local authorities rather than 'individual personal care records'.

However, depending on your care circumstances and especially if you have tried and been unsuccessful with other sources, this option may be something for you to consider. If you lived in a List D School or a children's home, there may be information about individual children available in inspection reports held by the Scottish Government (these records have been redacted). Historical inspection reports have not survived for all establishments and are often not complete for those establishments for which they do exist. It is also the case that they tend to focus on the quality of education provision, school management and other operational matters but will occasionally refer to an individual in the care of the establishment, or a staff member, when this was considered necessary or relevant by the inspector. Due to there currently being no access to the building where files are stored, please contact the Advance Payment Team on 0808 169 9740 to discuss access to this information.

National Records of Scotland

National Records of Scotland (NRS) holds the Scottish national archives. Its holdings include high level policy and strategic information produced by Government about the direction of the care service across the whole country, but not individual care records. NRS also has custody of historical inspection reports about schools and children's homes, court records. NRS does not actively seek to collect records of former care organisations, though it does hold a small number of such collections. Where records contain personal information, lifespan closures have been applied for data protection reasons. Requests for access to your information in closed records must usually be made directly to the records creator, as follows:

Inspection reports – for further information about records of inspections of schools and children's homes see the Scottish Government section.

Court records – for information about how to access court records see the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Services section.

Prison and Borstal records – for information about how to access prison records see the Scottish Prison Service section

Care records – NRS holds a small number of private care records, which may be of help to some applicants, as there may be admission and discharge registers. These include:

- Records of the Royal Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (RSSPCC) now known as Children 1st (NRS collection reference GD409)
- Dean and Cauvin Young People's Trust, Edinburgh (NRS collection reference GD417)
- Dr Guthrie's Schools, Edinburgh (NRS collection reference GD425)

Contact information for Children 1st and Dean and Cauvin Young People's Trust is provided elsewhere in this guide. For information on access arrangements to the records of Dr Guthrie's Schools contact the NRS Data Protection Officer.

Mental Welfare Commission – NRS also holds the records of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland (NRS collection reference MC), which include admission registers and patient case files. For information about accessing these records you should contact the NRS Historical Search Room: lsrhe@scotlandsppeople.gov.uk

Further information and contact details - You can find out more information about the records NRS holds by visiting the NRS website and by searching their online catalogue here <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/catalogues-and-indexesh>

For further guidance on the records held by NRS and access arrangements please contact their Data Protection Officer:

Address: Data Protection Officer, National Records of Scotland, HM
General Register House, 2 Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH1 3YY
Email: dataprotection@nrscotland.gov.uk
Phone: 0131 535 1314

National Health Service (NHS) – Patient records

The NHS may hold records of patients' medical treatment, including details of your address at the time when you were in care. Different parts of the NHS hold records. For example, your GP surgery where you are currently registered should have records about you and any hospital you have attended may hold records about you.

Similar to other organisations, the NHS has guidelines about how long it should keep health records, after which they can be destroyed. These rules have changed over time so whether or not a record is available will depend on what you are asking for and when it might have been created.

Please note that how you get information and how long it takes will vary depending on availability and the type of information that you are asking for. For example, proof of address for the purpose of applying to the Advance Payment Scheme is likely more straightforward than asking for more detailed information held in your records about your personal circumstances and background. When a patient requests access to a medical record, it is subject to a clinical review and finding the relevant detail could take a long time depending on the amount and complexity of the records. To ensure a clinical review happens, the request should be made to the current or last GP practice where the patient was registered.

To see your records you will have to apply to the organisation that is responsible for them, for example:

- **Your current GP practice manager:** GP records in Scotland tend to be kept for the lifetime of patient up until three years after their death¹. This is kept at the GP Practice where you are currently registered. GP records from other parts of the UK or other countries are not normally transferred to Scotland when you move to Scotland. Please note that the NHS was formed in 1948 and unique patient identity numbers (CHI numbers) were developed across the 1970s and 80s in Scotland and only fully established in the 1990's to enable records to be tracked. Therefore, there may be gaps in your registration history or gaps in some earlier patient records if you have moved GP practice since childhood. In the past, a gap in a patient's registration history may have led records to be destroyed. GP records might confirm your childhood address as being in care, or if you later disclosed that you were in care to your GP there may be an entry in your medical records. The practice manager in the GP surgery where you are currently or were last registered should be contacted to see what information they hold about you.
- If you are no longer registered with a GP practice and it is not possible for your last GP Practice to complete the request for information (for example, if the GP Practice has closed and no longer exists or you have been under the care of hospital for a prolonged period of time), you can issue a subject

¹ Scottish Government Records Management (2012, Jan): NHS Code of Practice (Scotland). Version 2.1. (Refer to page 54). Available to download: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-records-management-nhs-code-practice-scotland-version-2-1-january-2012/pages/8/>

access request to NHS NSS Practitioner Services to access your medical records:

Address: NHS NSS Practitioner Services, Gyle Square, 1 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 9EB

Phone: 0131 275 6000

Email: nss.p-cfs-data-protection@nhs.scot

- **The relevant NHS Board Records Department.** The minimum time that hospital records are kept depends on which health department was accessed. Each hospital has their own health records department and they should be contacted to find out about your health records

If you are unsure about accessing your health records or what information you might gain from health records, please contact the Advance Payment Team to discuss your particular circumstances.

A note about Long-stay Hospitals

In the past, Scotland placed some children and young people in long-stay hospitals. These included for example, places like Gogarburn and Lennox Castle. Over time, most hospitals of this nature closed and the residents moved to community based establishments. If you lived in one of these hospitals, because of their closure and the historical nature of the records, it might be difficult to find detailed records of your time in care. We know that most NHS archives tend to be held within university archives. Records may also be held by NHS NSS Practitioner Services. If you want to access records in relation to a long stay hospital and are not sure where to approach, again, please contact the Advance Payment Team to discuss your particular circumstances.

There may also be other more recent records that could show that you were in long term hospital care in the past, for example:

- Voluntary or supported housing association: if you moved to a community based service run by a voluntary or supported housing association -they might have some background papers from around the time that you were admitted. If so, you could ask that care or supported housing provider.
- Local authority social work department: you might have received a community care assessment around the time of your discharge, or since. The local authority social work department that undertook that assessment might have a record that refers to you having been resident in a long-stay establishment
- The NHS: may have notes or make reference to you having previously lived in a long-stay hospital (refer to the NHS section above contact details)

Further information and advice

Applicants have told us that contact with our team has proved helpful and supportive, and we would be delighted if you make us your first point of contact or to clarify any of the information in this guide.

If we are unable to help, we can discuss other organisations that may be available to help you find records. We will be able to advise on your specific circumstances and, with your agreement, contact support organisations on your behalf. **You can contact us on 0808 169 9740 or email at AdvancePaymentTeam@gov.scot**

Your Rights

You can get further information about your rights and accessing information and a template letter at the Information Commissioners Office, here <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/your-right-of-access/>.



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