Smartcard Registration Authority Policy
Chevin medical

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Introduction

A Registration Authority (RA) is the governance framework within which NHS organisations can register individuals as users of the NHS Care Records Service and other services - maintaining the confidentiality and security of patient information at all times.

Registration is the process by which users who require access to Smartcard-enabled IT applications are authenticated (proven who they are beyond reasonable doubt) and authorised (enabled to have particular levels of access to particular patient data and systems).

Local NHS England Regional Teams are responsible for commissioning local 'Registration Authorities' (RA) services.

Scope

This policy must be followed by all staff who work for or on behalf of the Practice including those on temporary or honorary contracts, secondments, volunteers, pool staff, Governing Body members, students and any staff working on an individual contractor basis or who are employees for an organisation contracted to provide services to the Practice. The policy is applicable to all areas of the organisation and adherence should be included in all contracts for outsourced or shared services. There are no exclusions.

Accountability and responsibilities

There are a number of key information governance roles and bodies that the Practice needs to have in place as part of its Information Governance Framework, these are:

DPO
Partnership Committee
Governance, Performance and Risk Committee

Caldicott Guardian
Information Asset Owner/Administrator
Heads of Service/department
All employees

Contacting your RA

General Practices can use the following list to find their local RA contact:

[List of RA contact details](#)

Where information is missing or incorrect you may obtain RA contact information from your local NHS England Regional Team

RA standards and processes

National RA operating guidance was published by HSCIC to assist local NHS England teams and LPCs to ensure that RAs are meeting appropriate standards. Although the RA has ultimate responsibility for smartcards matters, most day to day smartcard management ca be carried out by the Practice using the [Care Identity Service (CIS)](#).

[NHS Digital has produced comprehensive guidance for users in relation to this tool.](#)

Smartcard Roles in General Practice

There are several reasons for Smartcard use in General Practice, many of which will facilitate general use of the General Practice Clinical System and allow staff members to access the Clinical System and various adjunct applications under a role based access framework.

Appropriate 'roles' are applied to Smartcards so General Practice team members can carry out the tasks and duties relevant to their job.

In addition, there are two roles that can be assigned to a General Practice staff members' Smartcard so they can help other General Practice team members with Smartcard matters.

Both roles are slightly different and each 'role' controls what a General Practice team member can do and what they can see. The intention is to preserve patient safety and confidentiality.

These roles are:
Local Smartcard Administrator (LSA): A LSA can use the Care Identity Service (CIS) to assist with unlocking and renewing a Smartcard.

Sponsor: A Sponsor can use CIS to assist with unlocking and renewing a Smartcard. In addition, they can raise a request to have a new member of General Practice staff registered for a smartcard and raise a request to change a role.

Becoming an LSA/Sponsor
LSA's/Sponsors require:
- a functioning Smartcard
- two Smartcard readers at the Sponsor's General Practice premises
- understanding of the responsibilities and obligations involved;
- appropriate training
- RA approval.

Sponsor responsibilities

Familiarity with:

- Care Identity Service (CIS)

- Roles: Be familiar with the different types of access profiles / CIS positions to approve, and how to support other processes associated with cards.

- Scope of their sponsor role: Understand which user registrations they can support within the scope of the authority granted to them

- Local RA methods: Be aware of the method the local RA use to follow national guidelines and requirements. Sponsors will work with their local RA to maintain access to NHS CRS compliant systems within their area of responsibility consistent with the NHS Confidentiality Code of Practice and Care Record Guarantee.

- Temporary Access Card arrangements.

Identity checks by Sponsors

Sponsors must be assured of the identity for users they sponsor.
The sponsor needs to be assured that the user's identity has been confirmed beyond reasonable doubt and that the user requires the level of access requested and need to confirm with that the individual requires the requested level of access.

Care Identity Service (CIS)

The software system used to administer Smartcards is known as the [Care Identity Service (CIS).](#)

Uses

It is used to apply the appropriate level of access to General Practice staff (and other healthcare professionals) who need access to clinical systems by issuing them with an individual Smartcard and the appropriate role on that Smartcard. The system can also be used to unlock and renew Smartcards, update passcodes and the General Practice staff contact details.

Local Smartcard Administrators, Sponsors and other RA staff, for example, the RA Manager, RA Agents, RA Agents Advanced (who will predominantly sit at the RA Service Provider Organisation) will also use CIS to administer card matters.

Using

The CIS can be selected from [NHS Spine Portal](#): (Smartcard required).
[NHS Digital has produced comprehensive guidance for users in relation to this tool.](#)

Settings

Where you cannot access the Spine portal, this may relate to software/Java settings and therefore IT helpdesk should be contacted (e.g. their IT department if they have one, and/or their system supplier) to ensure their system is setup to run CIS as well as all of the other programmes the General Practice will need.

Prerequisites

The Practice network has to be configured to allow access to the NHS Spine Portal. Therefore, systems have to be able to connect with the following Spine Portal IP addresses:

https://portal.national.ncrs.nhs.uk/portal /
https://portal2.national.ncrs.nhs.uk/portal /
https://uim.national.ncrs.nhs.uk/portal