

A Guide to Obtaining Access to Information



**MATER MISERICORDIAE
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL**



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Types of information held by the hospital

The hospital holds a wide range of information contained in official records. This information is of a personal or business nature. Personal information is contained in patients' personal medical records and staff personnel files. Business information relates to the day-to-day management of the hospital.

The Freedom of Information Acts 1997 & 2003

The Freedom of Information Acts state that from April 21st 1998 every person has the following rights:

- The right of access to official records held by public bodies including this hospital
- The right to have personal information amended where such information is incomplete, misleading and/or incorrect
- The right to be given reasons for decisions that effect them which are taken by public bodies including this hospital.

The hospital's policy on access to information

The Mater Misericordiae University Hospital recognises its responsibility to members of the public in relation to providing access to the various records it holds. The hospital does this while taking account of the right of privacy of the individual and the public interest. As a result, we will try to release as much information as possible, without requiring you to use the Freedom of Information Acts.

How to make a request for personal information held within your medical record

When requesting your personal information you should apply in writing. Your request should contain the following information:

- Full Name (include maiden name if married)
- Date of birth
- Phone Number
- Address at the time of admission / treatment
- Enough information to allow the hospital to find the medical records; for example the period of admission or dates of attendance, the departments attended, and name of consultant if known
- Details of the exact records requested
- Reason for the request, to enable us to assign it to the right section

Proof of identity

When you seek access to personal information you will be asked to verify your identity by means of a birth certificate, a driving licence, or a passport.

Requests for access to medical records of another

When requesting access to the medical records of another, you should apply in writing giving the same patient details as above. Your request should also contain the following additional information:

- Details of your relationship to the patient.
- The patient's written consent, to the hospital releasing their information to you.

Charges

A small charge may be made for photocopying of medical records. A similar charge will be made for copies of x-ray films.

Where to send your request

Requests for information contained in personal medical records should be sent to:

The Routine Access Administrator.
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital,
Eccles Street,
Dublin 7
Telephone: 01 803 4311
Fax: 01 803 4777
E-mail: adminaccess@mater.ie

Acknowledgement of your request

Your request for medical records will be acknowledged within three working days. Access to the medical records will be granted within 28 days of receipt of application. If there is to be a delay in releasing the records, you will be informed of the reason for the delay, and given an approximate date as to when the records will be made available to you.

When access is refused under the hospital's Access Policy

In exceptional circumstances a personal medical record may not be released routinely to the owner of the information. In these circumstances the request will be re-directed to the Freedom of Information Department.

Records of the deceased

To protect the confidentiality of a deceased person's information requests for their records are processed through the Freedom of Information Department. To make a request you should write to:

**The Freedom of Information Officer,
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital,
Eccles Street,
Dublin, 7**

Telephone enquiries: 01 803 2982 / 2983

Fax: 01 803 2938

E-mail: foi@mater.ie

Your request should say that you are applying under the Freedom of Information Act, and should contain the following:

- Sufficient information to enable the hospital to identify the records requested
- Proof of your relationship to the deceased person
- Proof of your own identity
- Reason for the request.

How to make a request for business or non-personal information

Write directly to the relevant head of the department or service of the hospital

or

Write to the Freedom of Information Officer at the hospital. Your request should state that you are applying under the Act and should be accompanied by a €15 application fee (€10.00 for medical card holders). You may be asked for additional search and retrieval charges, however you will be informed of the estimated charges before work on the request commences.

How to request access to your own staff record

Current or past staff members should write directly to the Human Resources Manager at the hospital. You should include in the request proof of your identity.

Further details

Application forms for personal medical records and records of the deceased are to be found on the hospital's web site:

<http://www.mater.ie>

