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## **PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET**

### **Patient Access for children and Young People**

Access to 'Patient Access' will be granted to those with parental responsibility for children under the age of 12 so they can book appointments, use the repeat prescription ordering service and view allergies and immunisation history.

Due to patient/doctor confidentiality, those with parental responsibility of patients aged between 12 and 16 will not be granted access to this service and if already registered, once a child reaches the age of 12, their access to 'Patient Access' will automatically be removed by the system.

The reasoning behind this decision is that children over the age of 12 are generally considered to have the capacity to give or withhold consent to release medical records. Where the child is considered to be capable, then their consent must be sought before access is given to a third party. Due to the sensitive nature of information that can be accessed via 'Patient Access' it is felt that by allowing access to 'Patient Access' to those with parental responsibility for children aged between 12 and 16, it could mean the disclosure of information without the express consent of the young patients.

This can be a difficult scenario for the doctors at the practice, when deciding whether a child is mature enough to make decisions of this nature, people often talk about whether a child is 'Gillick competent' or whether they meet the 'Fraser guidelines'. Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines refer to a legal case which looked specifically at whether doctors should be able to give contraceptive advice or treatment to under 16 year olds without parental consent, but since then they have been more widely used to help assess whether a child has the maturity to make their own decisions and to understand the implications of those decisions.

Considering this scenario in working practice, this can be a difficult balance to achieve. Please be assured that in all circumstances, good practice dictates that a 'Gillick competent' child should be encouraged to involve parents or other legal guardians in any treatment/disclosure decisions. Further information regarding Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines can be found on the NSPCC website; <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/legal-definition-child-rights-law/gillick-competency-fraser-guidelines/>

### **What does this mean for 12-16 year olds and accessing services online?**

On behalf of your 12-16 year old, if they wish, you can still request repeat medication online by sending us an email to [whccg.twinoaksmedicalcentre@nhs.net](mailto:whccg.twinoaksmedicalcentre@nhs.net). You can cancel appointments by emailing us at the same address, but to make an appointment you will need to contact the surgery by telephone or in person.

When Calling Name reaches the age of 16 they can then re-register to use 'Patient Access'