

18.5 ICB Retention Schedule

This appendix sets out the retention period for different types of records relating to health and care.

The retention periods set out in the schedule are minimum periods. Record retention can be extended with justification. Retention periods begin when the records ceases to be operational. If the records comes back into use during its retention period then the period will reset and the retention duration will begin from the second period of use.

Health and care records should be reviewed before they are destroyed. This review should take into account:

- Serious incidents which would require records to be retained for longer periods
- Use of the record during the retention period which could extend its retention
- Potential cases for long-terms archival preservation (where records relate to rare conditions or innovative treatment decisions)

The schedule below outlines the types of records likely held by the ICB. The full retention schedule can be found as part of the NHS England Records Management Code of Practice.

[Records Management Code of Practice - NHS Transformation Directorate \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/records-management-code-of-practice/)

Record Type	Retention Period	Disposal Action	Notes
Care Records			
Adult health records not covered by any other section in this schedule	8 years	Review and consider transfer to archive	Check for involvements which could extend the retention. This includes medical imaging.
Adult social care records	8 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	

Children's records including midwifery, health visiting and school nursing	Up to 25 th or 26 th birthday	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retain until 25 th birthday or 26 th birthday if the patient was 17 when treatment ended. This includes medical imaging.
Electronic Patient Record Systems	Refer to notes	Review and destroy if no longer required	<p>Where the electronic system has the capacity to destroy records in line with the retention schedule, and where a metadata stub can remain demonstrating that a record has been destroyed, then the code should be followed in the same way for electronic records as for paper records with a log being kept of the records destroyed.</p> <p>If the system does not have this capacity, then once the records have reached the end of their retention periods they should be inaccessible to users of the system and upon decommissioning, the system (along with audit trails) should be retained for the retention period of the last entry related to the schedule.</p>
Integrated records – all organisations contribute to the same single instance of the record	Retain for period of longest speciality	Review and consider transfer to archive	The retention time will vary depending upon which type of health and care settings have contributed to the record.
Integrated records – all organisations contribute to the same records, but keep a level of separation	Retain for relevant speciality period	Review and consider transfer to archive	This is where all organisations contribute into the same record system but have their own area to contribute to and the system shows a contemporaneous view of the patient record.
Integrated records – all organisation	Retain for relevant	Review and consider	Organisations keep their own records but can grant 'view only' access to other

keep their own records, but enable them to be viewed by other organisations	speciality period	transfer to archive	organisations to help them provide health and care to patients or service users
Mental health records including psychology records	20 years, or 10 years after death	Review and consider transfer to archive	Covers records made under the Mental Health Act 1983 and 2007 amendments. This applies to records of patients and service users, regardless of whether they have capacity.
Pharmacy			
Controlled drugs – registers	2 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	See Misuse of Drugs Act 2001 for more information
Controlled drugs – order books, requisitions etc.	2 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	See Misuse of Drugs Act 2001 for more information
Pharmacy prescription records	2 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	A record of the prescription will also be held on the NHS BSA and there will be an entry on the patient records. Further guidance can be found on the Specialist Pharmacy Service website.
Event and Transaction Records			
Clinical Audit	5 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Five years from the year in which the audit was conducted. This includes the reports and data collection sheets/exercise.
Datasets released by NHS England and its predecessors	Delete with immediate effect	Delete in line with instructions and guidance on the retention	

Including NHS Digital		and disposal of data as issued through the Data Access Request Service (DARS) process	
Destruction certificates, or electronic metadata destruction stub, or record of clinical information held on physical media	20 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Destruction certificates created by public bodies are not covered by a retention instrument. They need to be destroyed after 20 years.
Equipment maintenance logs	11 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	
Inspection of equipment records	11 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	
Referrals – NOT ACCEPTED	2 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention period begins from the DATE OF REJECTION.
Requests for care funding – NOT ACCEPTED	2 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention period begins from the DATE OF REJECTION.
Research			

Research – datasets	No longer than 20 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	
Research – ethics committee’s and HRA approval documentation for research proposal and records to process patient information without consent	5 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	This applies to trials where opinions are given to proceed with the trial, or not to proceed
Research – ethics committee’s minutes (including records to process patient information without consent)	20 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Retention period begins from the year to which they relate and can be as long as 20 years. Committee minutes must be transferred to a place of deposit
Corporate Governance			
Board meetings	Up to 20 years	Review and transfer to place of deposit	A local decision can be made on how long to retain the minutes of board meetings (and associated papers linked to the board meeting), but this must not exceed 20 years, and will be required to be transferred to the local place of deposit
Board meetings (closed boards)	Up to 20 years	Review and transfer to place of deposit	Although these may still contain confidential or sensitive material, they are still a public record and must be transferred at 20 years, and any FOI exemptions noted, or indications that the duty of confidentiality applies.

Chief Executive records	Up to 20 years	Review and transfer to place of deposit	This may include emails and correspondence where they are not already included in board papers.
Committees (major) – listed in Scheme of delegation or report direct into the board (including major projects)	Up to 20 years	Review and transfer to place of deposit	
Committees (minor) – not listed in scheme of delegation*	6 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Includes minor meetings, projects and departmental business meetings. These may have local historical value and require transfer consideration.
Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Should be kept for the life of the activity to which it relates, plus six years after that activity ends. If the DPIA was one -off, then 6 years from completion.
Destruction certificates or record of information held on destroyed physical media	20 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Where a record listed for potential transfer to the place of deposit has been destroyed without adequate appraisal, consideration should be given to a selection of these as an indicator of what has not been preserved.
Electronic metadata destruction stubs			Refer to destruction certificates
Incidents – serious	20 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Retention begins from the date of the Incident – not when the incident was reported.
Incidents – not serious	10 years	Review and destroy if no	Retention begins from the date of the Incident – not when the incident was reported.

		longer required	
Incidents – serious incidents requiring investigation	20 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	These include independent investigations into incidents. These may have permanent retention value.
Non-clinical QA records	12 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins from the end of the year to which the assurance relates
Patient advice and liaison service (PALS) records	10 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins from the close of the financial year to which the records relates
Patient surveys – individual returns and analysis	1 year after return	Review and destroy if no longer required	May be required again is analysis is reviewed
Patient surveys – final report	10 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Organisations may want to keep final reports for longer than the raw data and analysis, for trend analysis over time. This period can be extended, provided there is justification and organisational approval.
Policies, strategies and operating procedures – including business plans	Life of organisation plus 6 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Retention begins from when the document is approved, until superseded. If the retention period reaches 20 years from the date of approval, then consider transfer to the place of deposit
Risk Registers	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention period in accordance with the Limitation Act and corporate awareness of risks
Staff surveys – individual returns and analysis	1 year after return	Review and destroy if no	Forms are anonymous so do not contain Personal Identifiable Data unless provided

		longer required	in free space boxes. May be reviewed again if analysis is reviewed.
Staff surveys – final report	10 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Organisations may want to keep final reports for longer than the raw data and analysis, for trend analysis over time. This period can be extended, provided there is justification and organisational approval.
Communications			
Intranet site	6 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	
Patient information leaflets	6 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	These do not need to be leaflets from every part of the organisation. A central copy can be kept for potential transfer.
Press releases and important internal communications	6 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Press released may form a significant part of the public record of an organisation which may need to be retained.
Public consultations	5 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Whilst these have a shorter retention period, there may be a wider public interest in the outcome of the consultation (particularly where this resulted in changes to the services provided) and so may have historical value
Website	6 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Websites are complex objects, but regular crawls can be undertaken. Guidance can be found: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/webarchive/guidance/
Staff Records and Occupational Health			

Occupational health records	Keep until 75th birthday or 6 years after the staff member leaves whichever is sooner	Review and destroy if no longer needed	
Occupational health report of a staff member under health surveillance	Keep until 75 th birthday	Review and destroy if no longer needed	
Occupational health report of staff member under health surveillance where they have been subject to radiation doses	50 years from the date of the last entry or until 75th birthday, whichever is longer	Review and destroy if no longer needed	
Staff record	Keep until 75 th birthday	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	This includes (but is not limited to) evidence of right to work, security checks and recruitment documentation for the successful candidate including job adverts and application forms.
Staff record – summary	Keep until 75 th birthday	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	
Timesheets	2 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	Retention begins from creation

Staff training records	See notes	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	<p>Records of significant training must be kept until 75th birthday or 6 years after the staff member leaves. It can be difficult to categorise staff training records as significant as this can depend upon the staff member's role.</p> <p>The following is recommended:</p> <p>clinical training records - to be retained until 75th birthday or six years after the staff member leaves, whichever is the longer</p> <p>statutory and mandatory training records - to be kept for ten years after training completed</p> <p>other training records - keep for six years after training completed</p>
Disciplinary records	6 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	Retention begins once the case is heard and any appeal process completed. The record may be retained for longer, but this will be a local decision based on the facts of the case. The more serious the case, the more likely it will attract a longer retention period. Likewise, a one-off incident may need to only be kept for the minimum time stated. This applies to all cases, regardless of format.
Procurement			
Contracts sealed or unsealed	Retain for 6 years after the end of the contracts	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Contracts – financial approval files	Retain for 15 years after the end of the contracts	Review and if no longer needed destroy	

Contracts – financial approved suppliers documentation	Retain for 11 years after the end of the contracts	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Tenders (successful)	Retain for 6 years after the end of the contracts	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Tenders (unsuccessful)	Retain for 6 years after the end of the contracts	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Estates			
Building plans, including records of major building works	Lifetime (or disposal) of building plus 6 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Building plans and records of works are potentially of historical interest and where possible, should be kept and transferred to the local place of deposit
Closed circuit television (CCTV)	Refer to SCW IG team for guidance	Review and destroy if no longer required	The length of retention must be determined by the purpose for which the CCTV has been used. CCTV footage must remain viewable for the length of time it is retained, and where possible, systems should have redaction or censoring functionality to be able to blank out the faces of people who are captured by the CCTV, but not subject to the access request, for example, police reviewing CCTV as part of an investigation
Equipment monitoring, and testing and maintenance where	40 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins from the completion of the monitoring or testing. This includes records of air monitoring and health records relating to asbestos

ASBESTOS is a factor			exposure, as required by the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
Equipment monitoring – general testing and maintenance work	Lifetime of installation	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins from the completion of the monitoring or testing.
Inspection Reports	Lifetime of installation	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins as the END of the installation period Building inspection records need to comply with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
Leases	12 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at point of lease termination
Minor building works	6 Years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the point of WORKS COMPLETION
Photographic collections – service locations, events and activities	Up to 20 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	These provide a visual historical legacy of the running and operation of an organisation. They may also provide secondary uses, such as use in public inquiries.
Surveys – building or installation (not patient surveys)	Lifetime of installation of building	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Retention period begins at the END of the INSTALLATION period
Finance			
Accounts	3 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate. Includes all associated documentation and records for the purpose of audit.

Benefactions	8 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	These may already be in the financial accounts and may be captured in other reports, records or committee papers. Benefactions, endowments, trust fund or legacies should be offered to the local place of deposit.
Debtors records – CLEARED	2 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate.
Debtors records – NOT CLEARED	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate.
Donations	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate.
Expenses	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate.
Final annual accounts report	Up to 20 years	Review and transfer to place of deposit	These should be transferred when practically possible, after being retained locally for a minimum of 6 years. Ideally, these will be transferred with board papers for that year to keep a complete set of governance papers.
Financial transaction records	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate.
Invoices	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate.

Petty cash	2 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate.
Private Finance Initiative (PFI) files	Life time of PFI	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Retention begins at the END of the PFI agreement. This applies to the key papers only in the PFI.
Staff salary information or files	10 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate.
Superannuation records	10 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which they relate.
Legal, Complaints and Information Rights			
Complaints – case files	10 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSURE of the complaint. The complaint is not closed until all processes (including potential and actual litigation) have ended. The detailed complaint file must be kept separately from the patient file (if the complaint is raised by a patient or in relation to). Complaints files must always be separate.
Fraud – case files	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSURE of the case. This also includes cases that are both proven and unproven.
Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, responses to the request and	3 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins from the CLOSURE of the FOI request. Where redactions have been made, it is important to keep a copy of the response as well as the redacted response sent to the requestor. In all cases, a log

associated correspondence			must be kept of requests and the response sent.
FOI requests – where there has been an appeal	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins from the CLOSURE of the appeal process.
Industrial relations – including tribunal case records	10 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Retention begins at the CLOSE of the financial year to which it relates. Some organisations may record these as part of the staff record, but in most cases, they should form a distinctive separate record (like complaints files).
Litigation records	10 years	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Retention begins at the CLOSURE of the case. Litigation cases of significant or major issues (or with significant, major outcomes) should be considered for transfer. Minor cases should not be considered for transfer.
Intel, patents, trademarks, copyright, IP	Lifetime of patent, or 6 years from the end of licence or action	Review and consider transfer to place of deposit	Retention begins at the END of lifetime or patent, or TERMINATION of licence or action.
Software licenses	Lifetime of software	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the END of the lifetime of software
Subject Access Requests (SAR), response, and subsequent correspondence	3 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at the CLOSURE of the SAR
SAR – where there has been an appeal	6 years	Review and destroy if no longer required	Retention begins at CLOSURE of appeal