DCCR - Searching and Demographics

Introduction

The guide relates to searching for a patient for Portal users and an overview of the Single Best Record concept.

Searching for a record (Portal only)

Searches for a patient can be made with the following information:
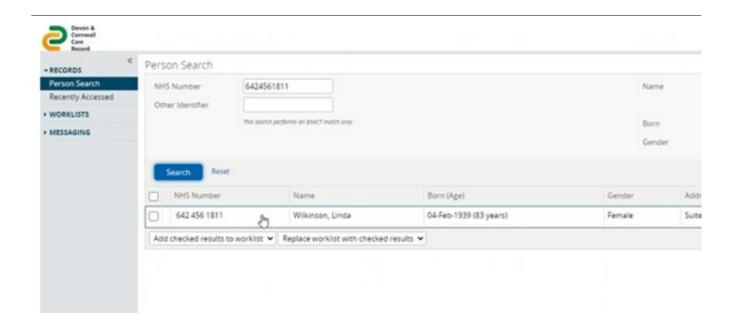
- NHS Number (preferred)

- Local Hospital number

- Given Name, Surname, DOB and Gender

For the NHS number and the hospital number wildcards (in the form of an asterisk) cannot be used.

Searching by demographic can include wildcards (*). The system also automatically searches for 'near matches', or typically used abbreviations of names e.g., Thomas/Tom Kate/Catherine. In this case all near matches are displayed and the correct one must be selected from the list.

If a record is not found this can be due to several reasons:

- The patient/client is not registered with a GP in Devon or Cornwall.

- The NHS or hospital number being searched on is incorrect (try searching by demographic).

- The name you are searching on is a nickname that does not typically apply to the given name e.g., Katie/Kelly.

- The DOB being in the US format or transposed e.g., 08/07/82 could be 7th of August or 8th of July.
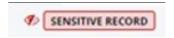

Deceased Patients

If a search returns a record for a patient who is deceased, this is indicated as such under the DoB. If this patient is selected a reason for access is required for audit purposes.

Sensitive Records

A very small number of records will be flagged within the PDS as being sensitive, and below marker will be shown to identify this. In this case the record is limited to show their name, NHS Number and DOB, and no contact or location details visible.

Locked Records

Individuals can object to their information being shared on the DCCR. These records will be returned in a patient search, but they are locked (indicated by the padlock symbol) which prevents users from accessing information other than basic demographic details that can be used to confirm that this is the correct record.

Temporary Residents/Patients registered with a GP out of area

Whenever a temporary resident, or an individual who is registered at a GP outside Devon,

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly has a hospital encounter, the record of that encounter will be available. However, their NHS number, or any data from other providers such as General Practice will not be available.

These records will only be searchable via local hospital numbers or demographics via the Portal and will not be returned for Launch in Context Users (which uses the verified NHS Number).

Single Best Record

The DCCR maintains a register of every patient registered with a GP in Devon or Cornwall. This is updated nightly via the national Patient Demographic Service (PDS) and will include the NHS Number of the patient.

The DCCR also received demographic detail from other organisations such as secondary care.

The DCCR receives this data and 'matches' this where possible with information already in the system from the PDS. In this case the DCCR checks each data item to ascertain which item is more current, and/or fills in 'gaps'. When the patient is selected within the DCCR a single best record is displayed based on the latest information that the DCCR has for that patient/client. For example, if the PDS did not have a mobile number registered, but an acute hospital sent an update with a mobile number this would be displayed alongside the PDS record.

As a holiday area there will of course potentially be many holidaymaker records in the system, but as these are not registered with a GP these will never match with a PDS record. These records can be searched for via the portal, but only via local hospital numbers or demographic details. These patients/clients cannot be found using Launch in Context as this only operates on the NHS number.

Data Quality

Due to the system receiving data from multiple sources there is a potential for data quality issues to arise. However, the system has several features to minimise the potential for failed matches.

For example, the system would match records where the different versions of names might be used (these are known as Hypocoristic). For example, Tom/Thomas, Liz/Elizabeth. The system will also deal with typographical errors and transcription errors. The system can also update information, that is display the latest information, where there is a certainty of a match and one of the data sets is more current. Note that this does not change any of the information in the provider systems.

There is, however, a limit to this and there is a reporting mechanism monitored by the support team who can look at records the system thinks might be a match, but is not certain enough to make a automatic link. The support team will work with the various data quality leads at stakeholder organisations where discrepancies are found.