

## Information governance requirements for General Practice

It has been brought to our attention that there has been some confusion on the information governance requirements for general practice - both in relation to what these encompass, and what is and is not mandatory.

The information outlined below aims to provide some clarification between the Information Governance Toolkit (IG Toolkit) and the Information Governance Training Tool (IG Training Tool).

GPC IT and JGPITC will be working with NHS Connecting for Health (CFH) to ensure that future versions of the IG Toolkit and IG Training Tool are relevant and more user-friendly.

### The Information Governance Toolkit

The IG Toolkit encompasses 13 requirements for general practice to self-assess against.

CFH state that completion of these self-assessments is necessary in order for practices to ensure that their CFH services continue to be provided. This is because every practice receiving these services needs to sign up annually to an IG Statement of Assurance, and the only way this can be signed/submitted is through the IG Toolkit online assessment.

As such, while completion of the IG Toolkit is not a *contractual* requirement, GPs cannot decline to do it if asked- it is de facto compulsory as practices rely on N3 connections, including for internet connection, path links with the acute trust, NHS mail, QMAS, GP2GP etc.

An updated version of the IG Toolkit is available each year in June/July with a deadline for practices to submit their self-assessments by 31 March of the following year. The IG Toolkit is now on version 8 - although the deadline for the 2010/11 Toolkit has now passed, practices can still submit their self-assessments for version 8 online. **We recommend that any practice which has not yet submitted their 2010/11 IG Toolkit self-assessments, submit these as soon as possible.**

To view the GP requirements on the IG Toolkit website, please navigate to:

<https://www.igt.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/RequirementsList.aspx?tk=406656983883642&Inv=4&cb=c82257c1-b60d-4156-978a-7df3bbc03869&sViewOrgType=4&sDesc=GeneralPractice>

Completion of the IG Toolkit self-assessments can be achieved relatively quickly, provided that the underlying work on IG has been undertaken.

One person from the practice will have been nominated as the IT lead – s/he will register for a user account and complete the online self-assessments on behalf of the practice. For General Practice, completing the self-assessments involves:

1. Answering each of the 13 IG Toolkit requirements (which involves putting a score between 0 and 3 depending on how well the practice thinks it is meeting each of the criteria)
2. Selecting the "Publish" button.
3. Finally, reading and accepting the "IG Assurance Statement".

The practice is given an overall score, and if it is deemed not to be meeting particular criteria, then the PCT will discuss this with the practice and make a plan for improvement to ensure that this is met the following year.

**PLEASE NOTE**, the requirement which has caused the most confusion is **Requirement 8-117** which states that "All staff members are provided with appropriate training on information governance requirements".

### Requirement Details ?

**All staff members are provided with appropriate training on information governance requirements**

Requirement No:	<b>8-117</b>
Initiative:	Information Governance Management
Key Requirement:	Yes
Organisation Type:	General Practice
Version:	8.0

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The key word here is 'appropriate' and the requirement itself does not state that all GP staff must complete the IG training tool modules (totalling 11 hours) (see section on IGTT below for more information).

If you expand 'Guidance' here, paragraph 6 states that *"The NHS undertakes mandatory on-line training using the NHS IG Training Tool which provides a valuable base on which to build."*

However, Connecting for Health has confirmed with us that the IG training tool modules are only mandatory for PCT staff **but not for GPs and GP staff**. Practices may, of course, choose to use these modules in order to meet requirement 8-117 of the IG Toolkit, but they do not have to, and can choose to provide 'appropriate training' through other means.

The Information Governance Training Tool (IGTT)

This is compulsory for PCT staff but CFH has confirmed that it is **not** compulsory for GPs and GP staff.

To view the modules, please navigate to:  
<http://www.igte-learning.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/igte/library.cfm>

There are 12 IG modules, ranging from 0.5 to 2 hours each. If one were to complete all the modules, this would equate to 11 hours in total.

Practices may opt to ask staff to use these modules, in order to meet requirement 8-117 of the IG Toolkit.