

Guidance for Using the Housing Consent Form

The Challenge

Information sharing between health and Housing Authorities is not always considered at the outset of discharge planning. This can lead to challenges later down the line when housing issues arise which can cause delays in discharge which could have been prevented with earlier engagement and open communication between health and housing.

The Solution

This consent form supports early and effective communication between health and housing services whenever a family has a housing need. It enables NHS Trusts to share and request relevant information with Local Housing Authorities (council housing teams), Housing Associations, and other third parties (such as solicitors or advocacy services) involved in supporting the family.

The aim is to prevent housing related delays in discharge by promote joint working and proactive information sharing from the outset, so that housing needs are considered and addressed in a timely way as part of discharge planning.

How to Use the Form

This form should be used whenever a family has a housing need and health services are involved in supporting them. The form can be used by:

- NHS Trust staff involved in discharge planning (e.g., Social Workers, Family Engagement Workers, Discharge Coordinators, Clinical Teams).
- Any Trust working with children or families where housing is impacting discharge.

Examples of when this form may be used include:

- When submitting a [Duty to Refer](#) (DTR) under the Homelessness Reduction Act, to formally notify the Local Housing Authority that a family is homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- When a family is actively engaged in a homelessness application and information sharing is needed to support their case and enable safe discharge.
- When a family is an existing social housing tenant but needs to move due to health-related issues — including:
 - Transfers to more suitable accommodation
 - Management moves for urgent health or safeguarding reasons
 - Mutual exchanges with another social housing tenant

- When housing officers need to be involved in Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings to support discharge planning and help address any housing-related issues that may affect the family's ability to return home.
- When engaging with Housing Associations or advocacy services (e.g., Citizens Advice, Shelter, solicitors) who are involved in supporting the family's housing case.

GDPR and Governance considerations

- Each Trust must check this form complies with their local GDPR, data protection, and information governance policies before use.
- Families must give clear and voluntary consent — they should understand what information will be shared, why, and with whom.
- Consent should be recorded and stored securely according to Trust procedures (e.g., within the patient's records).
- Only share what is necessary and relevant to address the housing issue and support discharge — no more.
- Staff should feel confident to use this form as a practical tool to address housing barriers in discharge planning.