

Standard Retention Periods

All records need to be managed according to the Health Records Management Policy and must be retained at least as long as the National Minimum Retention Guidelines.

There are 3 main types of record, Adult, Child and Mental Health. These all have different minimum retention periods as follows.

- **Adult Health Records**

Must be retained for 6 years after the date of last contact with the Health Service or Health Professional, or should be retained for 3 years after date of death.

- **Records Relating to Children**

Must be retained until the patients 25th birthday or 26th if the young person was 17 at conclusion of treatment, or for 3 years after death

- **Mental Health Records**

Retain for 20 years after date of last contact with mental health provider, or 3 years after death.



NHS Tayside also applies local exceptions to some categories of records.

- No surviving health record dated 1948 or earlier should be destroyed
- Where the deceased is a child, i.e. under 16 years of age – retain for 10 years after death
- Where there is a diagnosis of cancer – retain for lifetime of patient
- Where the patient has had cardiac surgery – retain for lifetime of patient
- Where there is a retention sticker – retain for period specified on sticker

Records for patients treated for Genetic Conditions must be kept for 30 years after last date of attendance.

Records of Joint Replacement should be kept for 10 years as replacement of the primary prosthesis may be needed.