

**Directorate for Primary Care  
General Practice Division**



**Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
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**For Action**

Chief Executives  
NHS Boards Primary Care Leads

**For Information**

Scottish General Practitioners Committee

4 May 2022

**Policy Enquiries to:**

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Dear Colleagues

**REGISTRATION ADVICE**

**Background**

1. Scottish Government [advised](#) GP practices in March 2020 that they should continue to accept applications from new patients. It is important that patients who have moved to new areas are able to register with a GP. Patients who are already registered with a GP in their area are able to apply to another practice for inclusion on their list of patients but those practices are not obliged to accept them or Health Boards to assign them to a practice list. The Scottish Government published guidance in 2018 setting out that patients do not need to prove their identity, address or citizenship when they wish to register with a practice. Lack of identification will of course affect how patients can be treated but it should not affect whether they are treated. This also applies to temporary patients.

**Next steps**

2. From 1st June 2022 Scottish Government will no longer be advising that GP practices are not obliged to accept patients who are already registered with a GP in their area i.e. from that point existing local registration alone will not be regarded as a good reason for declining a patient's application to register with a practice. After 1st June 2022 Health Boards and GP practices may still conclude that there are circumstances where it is reasonable for practices not to accept new registrations at least for a period.

**Enquiries**

3. In the instance of any enquiries on this circular please contact Michael Taylor.

PCA(M)(2022)10

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Naureen" followed by a stylized circular flourish.

Naureen Ahmad, GP Policy and Contract.