UKE0432_1.1 SFR Medical FAQs

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GENERAL SFR MEDICAL FAQs

If you have any questions about our process, would like input into a DPIA or if you have other security questionnaires, please do contact us. We have documents ready to share that can address your queries.

Q1. How can my police force start working with SFR Medical?

Contact us via email (contact@sfrmedical.com). We understand each police force has individual requirements, and we are happy to help with business cases, arrange meetings and supply any additional information that is required.

Once a decision has been made about the scope of the engagement, we just need a signed contract and we're good to go. SFR Medical can provide templates for a force's legal, operations and financial teams to review. Once everyone is in agreement, we work with a single internal point of contact at the force (SPOC) and on board the hospitals (see more on both below).

Q2. What form do you use for medical evidence statements?

We use a modified streamlined forensic report (SFR) template instead of an MG11. SFRs have historically been used to report on toxicology and fingerprint forensics and are being trialled for use in boot print forensics and road collisions. We have adapted the SFR template for medical evidence, and it has been accepted by various Crown Prosecution Services across the UK. No matter the severity of the crime, SFRs are admissible in court.

Q3. What are the differences between these medical evidence statement forms: an MG11, an SFR1 and an SFR2?

- An MG11 is traditionally an unstructured, prose-heavy medical statement that varies on quality and content based on the writer's qualifications. Historically, MG11s are hand-written and are littered with medical terms, making it difficult for the court, counsel and jury to understand. Additionally, a case may require multiple MG11s if multiple specialists assessed a victim.
- An SFR1 (MG22b) describes the injuries sustained and treatment received by a victim. The SFR1 includes information from all specialists a patient sees during their examination(s) at the hospital(s) and does not contain medical jargon. It forms s10 evidence once the prosecution and defence agree on the content.
- An SFR2 (MG22c) addresses specific questions that are raised by the defence or court after reviewing an SFR1. An SFR2 is s9 evidence and contains subjective conclusions that are written by experienced, qualified doctors. To date, SFR2s have been required in less than 1% of the cases we have worked on.

Q4. Who writes the medical SFRs?

We have a team of medical professionals (doctors) referred to as medical transcribers (MTs) who are trained to write clear, chronological SFRs that are jargon-free.

Q5. Are employees vetted?

All staff undergo an assessment as part of the application process, and everyone who has access to sensitive information are subject to additional checks, regardless of their location. All staff with access to sensitive information undergo vetting to an appropriate standard as defined by the Warwickshire Vetting Unit. All operational staff are certified medical professionals in verified good standing with their governing bodies.

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Q6. How long does it take to write a medical SFR?

For all standard SFR requests we endeavour to complete the SFR in less than ten working days after receiving a valid NPCC TPM form. This time excludes the time it takes to obtain the medical notes from the relevant hospital/medical institution**.**

For any urgent requests (see more information below) we endeavour to complete the SFR within 24 hours.

Q7. Do you have an urgent request service?

Yes, our urgent request service enables SFRs to be requested and completed within 24 hours. The fastest turnaround we have to date is 51 minutes. This service is ideally suited for when a suspect(s) is in custody awaiting a charging decision, or a trial is due to begin in the next seven days. This service requires additional approval from a senior ranking officer.

Q8. How do you ensure that the quality of the medical SFRs is high?

Each medical statement is written by a medical professional (doctor) who has been trained to write clear, jargon-free SFRs. Additionally, every SFR produced is peer reviewed before it's released to the requesting officer, ensuring all SFRs are of an excellent standard. Internal auditing of our service also enables us to be sure our SFRs are consistently achieving this excellent standard.

SFR1s are medical statements which detail the injuries sustained and treatment received by the victim. When both the prosecution and defence teams agree on its contents, the SFR1 becomes s10 evidence and is admissible in court.

If there are any issues with the content of the SFR1, we can produce an SFR2 (s9 evidence) to address the questions or concerns. To date, <1% of our SFR1s have been contested. We always ensure however that SFR2s are written by UK-based experienced doctors, who could attend court if required.

Q.9 How do officers request a medical SFR?

Officers request SFRs using the SFR Medical Portal; a secure online portal system (built using Microsoft Dynamics 365). The portal minimises the risk of a request being rejected by having mandatory fields for particular data and allows OICs and Supervisors the chance to easily review the progress of the request. Once the request is completed, the SFR +/- medical notes are downloaded from the SFR Medical Portal.

Q10. How long does it take to roll-out your service?

The maximum amount of time is approximately four weeks, as we need to fully brief all hospitals in a catchment area. However, this can be slightly shorter or longer depending on how many hospitals a force works with. Since some hospitals work with multiple forces, an individual hospital may be already familiar with the SFR Medical process and require minimal on-boarding.

Q11. Can you only write SFRs based on medical notes from hospitals?

It is completely at the discretion of the police force. We can liaise with hospitals, but if you wish, we can also produce SFRs which cover the assessment and treatment of a victim at any medical institution (i.e. GP surgeries, dentist surgeries, health centres and community mental health services).

Q12. Can you help with backlogged cases?

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Absolutely. The only requirement we have is that in any cases where SFR Medical need to obtain medical records on behalf of the police force, a valid NPCC TPM form is provided, which states that SFR Medical can process the relevant data.

Q13. Are you Data Protection Act 2018 compliant?

Yes, and we are registered with the ICO. Communication with officers and hospitals happens through our secure email system and/or through the portal. Additionally, in any case where SFR Medical will be obtaining medical records on behalf of the police force, we will not begin to do so until we have received a valid NPCC TPM form.

Q14. What is your pricing model?

There is no monthly or retainer fee – a force simply pays for the number of specialities within the SFR1s completed or the number of questions in each SFR2 completed each month plus a processing fee which is a set percentage of the total.

Q15. Are you registered on a procurement framework?

We are an approved subcontractor to Soft-cat, who is a permitted supplier on SBS NHS Consult 18, Lot 10. Many forces are already registered on this Framework, and if yours is not, the sign-up process is easy and free of charge at https://www.sbs.nhs.uk/proc-framework-agreements-support.

There are small pricing differences if a force contracts with us via the framework or direct awards us the business. Which route a force takes is a decision that each force and their procurement departments must make on their own.

Q16. What is the invoicing process?

We provide comprehensive management information at the end of each month and only charge for completed reports. One is the invoice and the other is an itemised bill. The invoice includes the total amount charged (quantity, unit prices, VAT) for all requests that month.

The itemised bill includes details for each request broken down by:

- tracker number
- hospital(s) involved in the care of the victim
- name of the MT
- date completed SFR was sent to the officer
- number of specialties
- specific specialities
- cost per medical SFR
- if the case was urgent
- if the case was free (We do not charge for standard SFR1s where the victim works for the CPS, Fire and Rescue Services, an NHS organisation, Transport for London (TfL), a UK Police Force, or is an internal member of the SFRm team. It's our way of saying thank you to all frontline workers). **Please note that only standard SFR1s qualify for this complimentary service.**

Q17. What are our Key Performance Indicators?

The turnaround times for both our standard and urgent requests are our KPIs.

Q18. Can you supply references?

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Absolutely. If you'd like references, please contact us and (with their agreement), we'll share our referees' names and email addresses with you.

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