

Supporting the Provider Market

NHSmail Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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Introduction

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) apply to any CQC registered organisation in County Durham using an nhs.net email address.

If you are unable to find what you are looking for in this document or require more dedicated support, please contact the Supporting the Provider Market Team (STPM) at stpm@durham.gov.uk or via telephone on 03000 260 222.

Summary

Sending information electronically is now part of our everyday life. Emails sent to and from health and social care organisations must meet the secure email standard (DCB1596), so everyone can be sure sensitive and confidential information is kept secure.

There are two methods to comply with the secure email standard (DCB1596):

1. Use/implement an already compliant service such as NHSmail. NHSmail is the national secure collaboration service for health and social care in England, which allows social care, health and providers to communicate electronically with each other. Email addresses will have the nhs.net domain.

2. Demonstrate your own email system is compliant with the secure email standard (DCB1596), by following [The secure email standard - NHS Digital](#) accreditation process. Accredited providers can use their own email domain.

All sensitive identifiable patient information should be sent via secure email, such as:

- Care plans
- Assessments
- Referrals
- Medication updates
- Hospital discharge information
- Information from GP/Pharmacy

Individual Mailbox

What is an NHSmail Individual user account?

Individual user accounts enable you to access emails – they are allocated on an individual basis, per user.

Users of NHSmail must not share their email account password or allow a colleague to use their account. If a colleague without NHSmail needs to use an NHSmail account, a new account must be applied for.

Why do I need an individual NHSmail account?

To send and receive secure emails to health and social care professionals and to gain access to the providers shared mailbox for NHSmail. Please see [when do I use a shared mailbox vs individual](#) for guidance on when to use each.

Do I need a password to use my NHSmail Individual user account?

Yes. Every individual requires their own username and password to access NHSmail for their personal mailbox. These will be sent to the personal email address and mobile phone number you supply when you apply for your account.

You will need to ensure your account remains active by logging into your account, update your profile or send an email, at least every 30 days otherwise it may be de-activated or removed from the service.

Why is my mobile phone number needed to set up my Individual user account?

A mobile phone number needs to be provided when applying for an NHSmail account as temporary passwords are sent via a text message.

It is important that this mobile phone number is only used once within the registration portal as the number will also be used to check that an account for you is not already in use. The phone number must be a mobile phone number and must be unique to you.

It is recommended you do not remove your mobile phone number as this will be used by the national administration team as part of the authentication checks for account administration purposes, such as resetting your password or unlocking your account.

I have received my NHSmail Individual user account but not the shared NHSmail account – what should I do?

If you have received your personal NHSmail account and not your shared NHSmail account, you should [contact NAS](#) providing your first and last name and organisation data services (ODS) code ([How do I find my ODS code](#)).

How do I temporarily disable my NHSmail Individual user account?

[Contact NAS](#) from your personal NHS email address or from the shared mailbox. In your email, please state your NHS email address, registered mobile number associated with your account and when you'd like your account disabled.

The shared mailbox owner can also request an account to be disabled on behalf of a user whose account is linked to the shared mailbox.

Your account can be disabled during your time away from work for up to 18 months, after which it will become eligible for deletion.

How do I enable my NHSmail Individual user account again?

You can [contact NAS](#) using the registered mobile number associated with your account and request your account is enabled.

Alternatively, you can [contact NAS](#) from the shared mailbox you are linked to. In your email, please state your NHS email address and registered mobile number associated with your account.

How do I reset my password/unlock my NHSmail Individual user account?

If you know your user account security questions/secret, use the self-service password reset/unlock account on the [portal](#).

If you do not have user account security questions/secret set, please [contact NAS](#). When calling the helpdesk, the account holder will need to provide:

- email address of their NHSmail account
- mobile number linked to the account

Additionally, if you would like to send the password to a different mobile number than the one linked to your account, a confirmation email from the shared mailbox will be required to authenticate.

Note: Mobile numbers used to register for an NHSmail account must be UK based number, starting with (07).

What if I forget my password, my Individual user account secret and do not have a mobile phone number which can be used as authentication?

You will need to speak to the shared mailbox owner of your site account, and they will need to [contact NAS](#) to confirm they can authenticate you, and ask them to reset your password.

The National Administration Service will ask the shared mailbox owner to confirm the mobile phone number for the temporary password to be sent to. It is the responsibility of the shared mailbox owner to ensure local validation checks on individuals have been completed.

Shared Mailbox

What is a shared mailbox?

A shared mailbox (also known as a generic mailbox) is allocated to each CQC registered social care site and can be accessed by a group of users within that organisation. The shared mailbox can only be accessed via an individual user account.

Who should have access to the shared mailbox?

Anyone who communicates with Social Care and Health colleagues with sensitive identifiable information involved in their Service User's care.

How do I access a shared mailbox?

The following links provide guidance around the different ways you can access a shared mailbox your user account is linked to, either as a member or owner:

- Access a shared mailbox in [Outlook desktop](#)
- Access a shared mailbox in [Outlook Web App \(OWA\)](#)

How many users should the shared mailbox have?

There should be enough users with access to the shared mailbox to ensure the mailbox is covered 24/7. This will depend on your organisation and its structure. The mailbox should have at least 2 users, usually the registered manager and administrator/deputy manager, but we would recommend more than 2 staff have access (who are in appropriate roles) to ensure sufficient cover for leave, sickness etc. Providers also need to think about access on a weekend and overnight, to maintain the 24/7 mailbox coverage.

How do I add new users?

To add new users, a request should be sent from the site shared mailbox to the Helpdesk@nhs.net with the following information:

- **For users without an NHSmail account:**
 - New user's full name
 - New user's personal mobile phone number (must start '07)
 - New user's personal email address
- **For users with an existing NHSmail account:**
 - User's full name
 - User's NHSmail email address
 - Users existing linked mobile phone number (must start '07)
 - State in the email that this user is to be added as a **joiner**. To be added as a joiner the user must have been marked as a leaver by their old organisation if this has not already been done. To check this [contact NAS](#).

Note: Please also confirm in both instances if the account is to be linked to the shared mailbox as an owner or a member.

Please note: The NAS helpdesk will never require more than the above information. Please refrain from providing information, particularly Personal Identifiable Data (PID) for example date of birth, personal address, unless explicitly requested as per this FAQ document.

What is a shared mailbox owner?

Each social care provider will have a nominated shared mailbox owner. The shared mailbox owner is responsible for controlling the access to the shared mailbox for the site.

- NHSmail users can be a shared mailbox owner for more than one shared mailbox
- Shared mailboxes can have more than one owner where this is required for business continuity purposes

What is the role of a shared mailbox owner?

Shared mailbox owners are responsible for:

- Contacting the National Administration Service (NAS) to arrange for new users within their social care site, to be set up with NHSmail accounts
- Cascading log in usernames and passwords for new NHSmail users
- Supporting new users to log in to their account for the first time
- Providing access permissions to the shared mailbox for all staff within their organisation
- Ensuring that all staff adhere to the Data Security and Protection Toolkit
- Removing access permissions to a shared mailbox for leavers

What are the shared mailbox permissions?

All users who have access to the shared mailbox will have 'Send As' permission allowing them to open the shared mailbox, view incoming emails and send emails from the shared mailbox email address. The email message will appear to have been sent from the shared mailbox and will have no affiliation to the user's personal email address.

The shared mailbox owner will have additional access rights to control all user permissions within the mailbox and to add and remove users, as found in [How do I add new users](#).

What happens if we cannot email from the shared mailbox?

If you cannot email from the shared mailbox, for example, if the members/owners have become inactive, they can reactivate their account by logging into their NHSmail account.

If the shared mailbox members/owners are no longer present, please [contact NAS](#) to go through authentication options to enable the linking of new users to the mailbox.

Can I change my organisation's shared mailbox email address?

You cannot change the organisation shared mailbox email address. All shared mailboxes have the following naming convention.

Social Care	Shared mailbox email address	care.ODScore@nhs.net
	Display name	Care.ODScore (Care home name, Town)

I am a shared mailbox owner – what is my mobile phone number used for?

Shared mailbox owners are required to supply a mobile phone number that they have access to and to be the primary point of contact for the National Administration Service to liaise with if, for example, another user in their organisation forgets their password and is unable to remember their user account secret, and they do not have a mobile phone number that can be used as part of the authentication process.

What do I do if I am unable to access my organisation's shared mailbox?

In the first instance, speak with your site's shared mailbox owner to add you as a member. To do this the shared mailbox owner should:

- Follow the steps found in [How do I add new users](#), and state your account should be added to the shared mailbox

If nobody in your organisation can now access the shared mailbox, you will need to [contact NAS](#) and follow the below steps:

- Call the Helpdesk from the appropriate CQC registered site telephone number (the telephone number that CQC displays for your site on their website)
- State that no one now on site can access the shared mailbox and that a new owner needs to be added
- Provide the new owner's name, personal contact number (must start '07) and personal email address, if they already have an NHSmail user account, provide this information in the first instance
- Any other users can be added in the same way at this time, or by the shared mailbox owner at a later date

I have received my shared NHSmail account but not my NHSmail Individual user account – what should I do?

If you have received your shared NHSmail account and not your personal NHSmail account you should [contact NAS](#) providing your first and last name, organisation data services (ODS) code ([How do I find my ODS code](#)) and the name of the organisation / site shared mailbox that you have been set up with.

I need more than 10 user accounts within my organisation for business continuity – is this possible?

Standard NHSmail provision for NAS managed accounts is one shared mailbox and up to 10 user accounts per site.

An exception to this is for social care sites, which can now request additional user accounts with sufficient justification.

Please [contact NAS](#) for more information about the process.

General

What should I do if I already have an NHSmail account?

You must not apply for another user account via the NHSmail registration portal, as this will create a duplicate account causing confusion with your colleagues. The NHSmail registration portal should only be used for those that do not already have an NHSmail account.

If you require access to the site shared mailbox for NHSmail, the shared mailbox owner can grant you access once the shared account has been created.

How often do I need to log into my NHSmail account?

To ensure your personal NHSmail account is not marked as inactive and removed from the NHSmail service, you need to log into your account at least every 30 calendar days.

Note: It is recommended that the account is accessed on a regular basis to ensure that all clinical referrals and urgent communications are received and processed in an appropriate and timely manner.

I have forgotten my NHSmail account details – what do I do?

If you are unsure if you have been set up with an NHSmail account, or have forgotten your NHSmail account details, please contact your shared mailbox owner who will be able to contact the NAS via your sites shared mailbox asking for an audit of linked accounts which should include your own. If you have forgotten your password, then please follow the steps in [How do I reset my password/unlock my account](#).

How can I find out more about managing my mailbox quota?

You should regularly check and keep within the quota of your mailbox, as when your mailbox is over quota you will not be able to receive or send emails.


Information is available in the guide [Manage your mailbox quota](#).

Can I access NHSmail via Outlook Desktop Application?

Yes. Outlook tends to be the preferred platform and NHSmail can easily be set up in [Outlook desktop](#). This will also simplify the log in process and allow you to manage all mailboxes from one place.

How do I view and download attachments via the NHSmail portal?

To view and download attachments from your NHSmail account, via the [NHSmail portal](#), you must be using a private computer. Ensure that when you log into NHSmail you check the box next to the statement 'This is a private computer', and then sign in.



What do I do if my name changes?

If your name changes e.g. you get married and change your surname, you should [contact NAS](#).

My application has been rejected because my organisation does not meet the minimum requirement for the Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT) – what should I do?

To join NHSmail, providers must have completed the [Data Security and Protection Toolkit \(DSPT\)](#) to at least 'Approaching Standards, Standards Met/Exceeded level'.

Further information on DSPT is available on [Data Protection and Cyber Security](#).

I am joining an organisation that requires NHSmail, who should I contact?

If you are joining an organisation which requires you to have NHSmail, then please contact your new site's shared mailbox owner and provide the relevant information for your situation as found in [How do I add new users](#).

I have NHSmail and am leaving an organisation, what should I do?

If you leave an organisation and have an NHSmail account, then please follow the below steps:

- If your organisation is NAS managed, please [contact NAS](#) via email, asking them to mark your NHSmail account as a leaver and to be removed from your site's shared mailbox (providing details of the shared mailbox)
- Alternatively, contact your shared mailbox owner, who can request the above actions on your behalf
- If you are the shared mailbox owner, then please also request your owner permissions are removed, and **ensure you request another user at your site is given these permissions**.

Once your account has been marked as a leaver, it will be eligible for deletion after 30 calendar days unless joined to a new organisation.

It is important once your account has been marked as a leaver and you are moving to a new organisation with a need for NHSmail, you must contact the shared mailbox owner of the new organisation to be marked as a joiner.

If you no longer need NHSmail at your new organisation, or are leaving your profession entirely, you should ensure any data required by your team is saved locally for them to access at a later date, before your account is deleted.

Note: NHSmail accounts that are not utilised for 30 calendar days become inactive and will be eligible for deletion after a further 30 calendar days.

Important note: If you are moving between sites owned by the same parent organisation, and your NHS mail address shows the organisation name rather than site name, it's likely your NHS mail accounts are managed by your organisation. Please ask your new site manager to request access to your new site shared mailbox and remove you from your previous site shared mailbox.

When do I use a shared mailbox vs individual?

Unlike an individual email account, the shared mailbox allows multiple users access using their own credentials. This allows the users access to manage emails in a single place, avoiding the risk of missing time sensitive information.

The shared mailbox address for your service is the email address Social Care and Health colleagues will use to contact your site and provides real-time visibility of incoming emails, ensuring transparency and accountability to the team.

Individual accounts are personal to the user and may need to be used for confidential information that should not be shared/accessed by other team members (e.g. HR documents).

What is a CQC Location ID and CQC Contact ID?

Care Quality Commission (CQC) location ID – this is your CQC registration number for your site and different to your CQC Provider ID.

CQC Contact ID – this is a code that is within your CQC registration information (can be found on the Registered Managers certificate) and is also known as the Registered Manager's ID.

How do I find my ODS code?

To find your organisation data services (ODS) code, use the [ODS Code Search](#). Please use your post code as a minimum when using the search.

What if my site changes its ODS code?

There are two reasons this may occur:

- **Change in ownership**

When a site changes ownership and is acquired by a new parent company, the existing site must close their shared mailbox by emailing from said mailbox to helpdesk@nhs.net requesting that it is closed due to acquisition. Any data within the shared mailbox should be saved locally for business continuity and to adhere to any regulatory or contractual requirements regarding recording and storage of Service User information.

It is the existing organisation/shared mailbox owner's responsibility to ensure this happens.

Your site will be provided with a new ODS code, and you will need to use this new code to [register](#) again for a new shared mailbox. It may take up to a month for the code to reflect within the NHSmail system.

- **Change in registration**

When a new parent organisation has bought the debts and liabilities of the previous parent organisations business, the original shared mailbox can continue to be used.

The current shared mailbox owner should **proactively** update the [NAS](#), by emailing them from the shared mailbox, informing them that the ODS code is changing, and request the shared mailbox name is updated, with the previous becoming an alias.

For any existing members of the shared mailbox that are no longer employed by the new organisation, an email needs to be sent to the [NAS](#) requesting these users are removed from it and marked as leavers.

It is the responsibility of the shared mailbox owner to remove users that no longer require access to the shared mailbox. If previous staff members remain linked to the shared mailbox, they will be able to access emails resulting in a possible data breach.

For social care users – If in the scenario where there is a continuity of business/users and the existing shared mailbox (renamed), but there are no longer any attached owners or member, then please [contact NAS](#) from the CQC registered phone number, and confirm the situation, your name and registered managers ID. If all align, then you will be set as the shared mailbox owner and the change of name actioned.

What is the NHS Directory?

The NHS Directory (People Finder) provides a single source of contact information for health and social care. The [directory](#) is available via the [NHSmail portal](#) and provides the ability to search for people based on a number of different profile attributes for example, name, clinical speciality and location.

You can search for shared mailboxes and distribution lists using the Organisation Data Service (ODS) code, location and postcode ([How do I find my ODS code](#)).

What is the response time when I email the National Administration Service?

The National Administration Service will endeavour to respond to your enquiry as soon as possible. The team is available from 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays.

Outside of these hours simple tasks like password resets can be performed by yourself or you can [email](#) the NHSmail helpdesk.

I've contacted the NHSmail helpdesk about my account query but it hasn't yet been resolved, who do I contact?

In the first instance, the initial query process is to [contact NAS](#).

The process below should be followed if a query is still outstanding and not yet been resolved.

- All escalations should be sent to feedback@nhs.net for your request to be investigated. You should include the ticket reference number and/or the date and time of the call, which should hopefully speed up this process.
- If you have called the NAS Helpdesk and feel you are not getting your query resolved by the front-line helpdesk during a call, you can escalate whilst on the call (or in a subsequent call) asking to speak to a 'Subject Matter Expert' who will be able to assist further.

Contacts & Useful Links

National Administration Services (NAS) Contacts

Please take advantage of the national support available by using the following contact details:

Email	Helpdesk@nhs.net
Telephone	0333 200 1133 To get through to a Social Care agent select Option 1 and 1 again

Useful Links

This document has been developed using national NHS guidance to highlight some of the most common topics for convenience. However, additional detail and support can be found in the following links if required:

[NHSmail Portal](#)
[NHS Digital](#)

[NHSmail Support](#)
[Digital Care Hub](#)

[Digitising Social Care](#)