



General Practice Firearms update

- Dr Jack Jacobs GP LMC Medical Director
- Donna Clarke LMC Practice Manager Executive
- Mark Jezard – Firearms Licensing Manager, Tactical Operations Command, Kent Police



General Practice Firearms update

28 000 Firearms licences in Kent

Process of firearms issue and renewal.

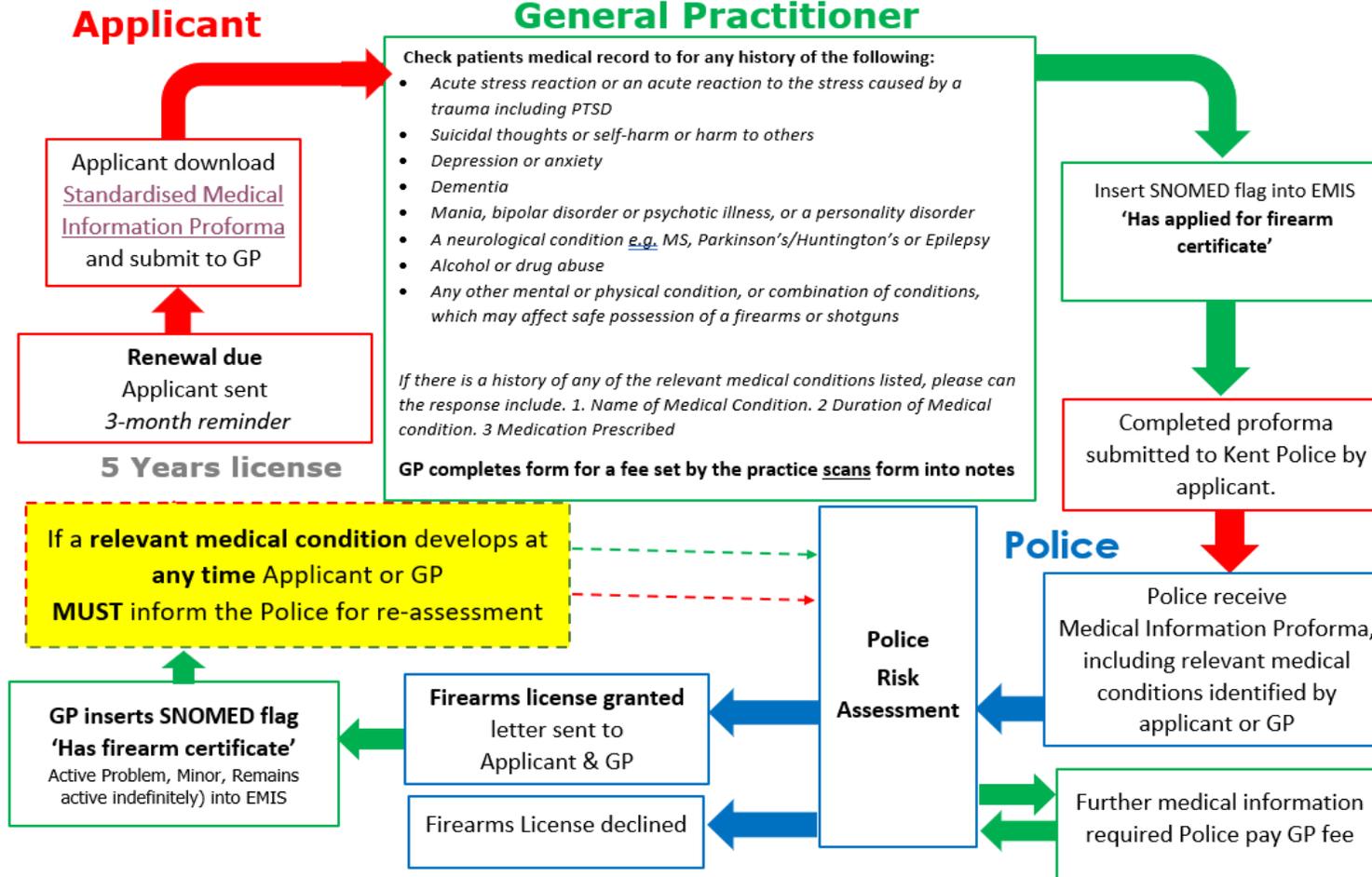
Responsibility / Guidance / MOU

Monitoring / alerts / tricky areas



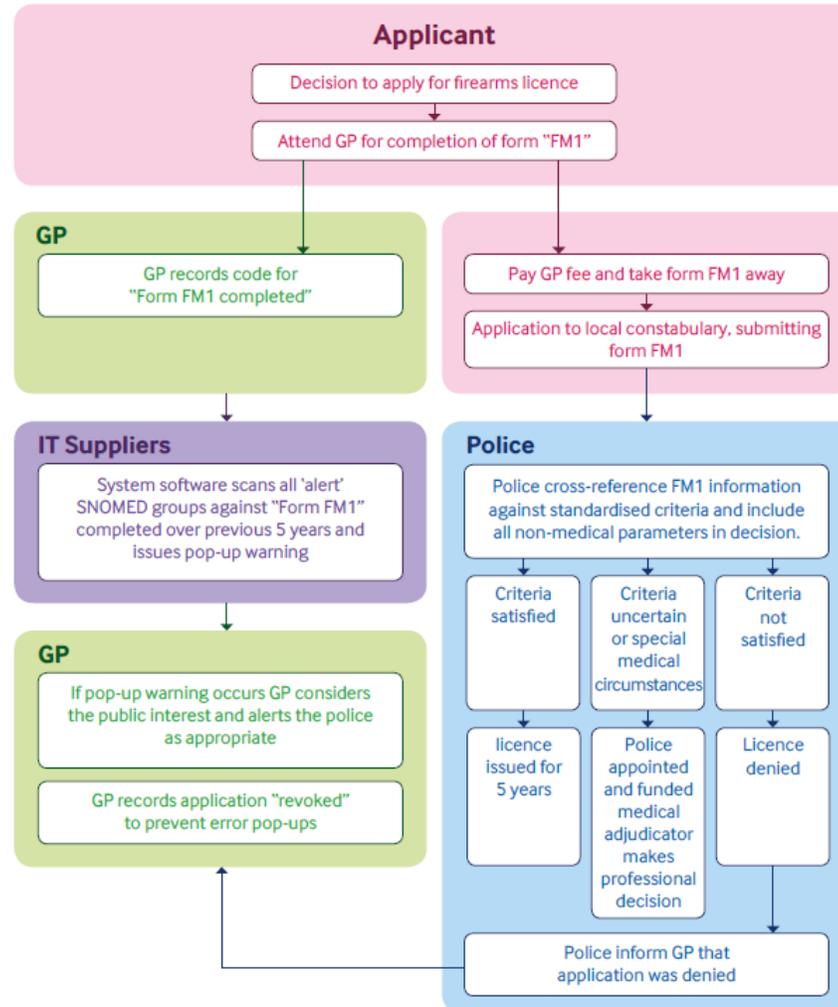
Firearms Licensing Process

General Practitioner





Firearms licensing flowchart





[Firearms Standardised Medical Information Proforma \(link\)](#)

Once received it is recommended the practice have the form completed by 21Days



1. What medical conditions are relevant?

- The medical information is key to the police decision. The GP must list any of the conditions detailed on the form BUT the list is not exhaustive. For example, terminal diagnoses or anything else you consider may impact mental state. The license holder does have responsibility to inform the police, but it may be something you wish to consider.

2. What should go in the additional information section.

- The answers to the questions on page two of the GP report will provide the Firearms Licensing Manager with invaluable information and build a picture of the applicant and their motivations. In particular the background or trigger factors in a mental health issue i.e., marital problems, domestic violence, financial worries, work stresses, bereavement etc. ***Quite often the explanation an applicant gives the police differs significantly from the notes a GP holds.



Date: 13 November 2022
Our Ref: «certificate_number»

«forename» «surnamecaps»
«address_1»
«address_2»
«address_3»
«address_4»
«postcode_1» «postcode_2»
D.O.B «birth»

Firearm Certificate Issued

What action is required from the GP practice

Please add the SNOMED Code "**Has firearm certificate - active problem, Minor, Remains active indefinitely**" into EMIS clinical record.

Information sharing between GPs and police firearms licensing departments
Arrangements between GP and police representatives in England, Wales and Scotland have provided for information sharing to protect public safety, and this includes a recommendation to place a firearm code on patient records. You can obtain further information in the Firearms Licensing pages on Gov.UK.

Relevant medical conditions

If a patient develops a relevant medical condition the GP may advise the patient to inform the police about their existing certificate and the new condition, or the GP may, if in the public interest, inform the police directly. 'Guidance for GPs on the firearms licensing process -BMA July 2022'

Relevant medical conditions which may affect a person's ability to safely possess and use a firearm can include:

- Acute Stress Reaction or an acute reaction to the stress caused by a trauma
- Suicidal thoughts or self-harm
- Depression or anxiety

- Dementia
- Mania, bipolar disorder or a psychotic illness, or a personality disorder
- A physical condition: for example, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's or Huntington's disease, epilepsy
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Any other medical or physical condition which you think may be relevant.

Further information

If you need further information about any aspect of the process or your involvement, please telephone or email the firearms licensing department. This letter has been written with the support and help of Kent & Medway Local Medical Committee.

Yours sincerely

Mr Mark Jezard
Firearms Licensing Manager
Kent Police



The Home Office statutory guidance

The new 2019 statutory guidance for greater consistency and higher standards of decision-making for police firearms licensing applications (including shotguns).

- police background checks
- new arrangements for assessing the medical suitability of applicants.

It ensures that no one is granted a firearms certificate unless their regular GP, or a suitably qualified alternative doctor with access to the full medical record, has confirmed to the police whether they have any relevant medical conditions. This includes any mental health conditions.



BMA, the Home Office signed a memorandum of understanding in July 2019 with the National Police Chiefs Council and the BMA.



MOU 2019

1. The BMA, police and HO recognise that the interests of the public and of firearms owners are best served where there is an **effective system to assess the medical suitability of firearms applicants, and to monitor the continued medical fitness** of those in possession of firearms licences, to ensure they do not pose a danger to themselves or others.



MOU 2019

2. The BMA, police and HO acknowledge and agree that **legal responsibility** for any **assessment** of the **suitability** of **individuals to possess guns**, other than firearms prohibited under section 5 of the 1968 Act where the responsibility lies with the Home Office, **lies with the police**, and not with GPs. However, **factual medical information provided by an applicant's GP can help police** ensure they have the necessary information to determine a person's medical suitability to possess a firearms licence



MOU 2019

3. Similarly, the legal responsibility for assessment of ongoing risk presented by licensed gun holders rests with the police, and not with GPs

GPs are encouraged to place a firearms flag on GP records, to alert the GP if a patient begins to suffer from a relevant medical condition while the firearms licence is valid.

Where such a system is in operation the GP will **endeavour** to share such information with the police, while recognising no legal liability if they fail to do so.



Responsibility of the applicant

Responsibility of the applicant to arrange for information on their medical suitability to be provided by their GP (or another suitably qualified doctor registered with the GMC) to the police firearms licensing department dealing with their application.

When the medical information is being provided to the police by a doctor from a private company, the doctor must receive the applicant's full medical record direct from the GP practice and not via the applicant.



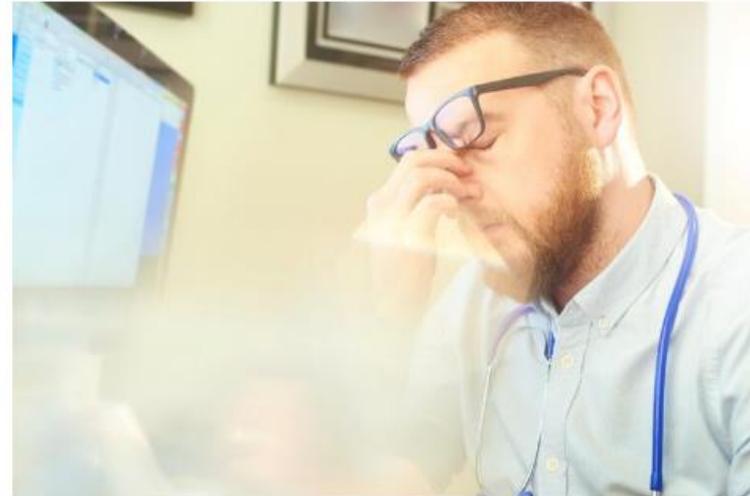
Monitoring

If a patient develops a relevant medical condition the GP may advise the patient to inform the police about their existing certificate and the new condition, or the GP may, if in the public interest, inform the police directly. 'Guidance for GPs on the firearms licensing process -BMA July 2022'

BMA 'This stated that, whilst the legal responsibility for monitoring firearms holders rests with the police, doctors should use 'reasonable endeavours' to support the process.'



Firearms alert system paused days after launch over accuracy concerns



Caitlin Tilley | 19 July 2022 | [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [✉](#)

A new digital firearms marker function has been paused on EMIS just a week after it was launched due to concerns over the 'accuracy' of the tool.

The digital firearms marker provides GPs with alerts during both the application process and the lifecycle of an issued firearms licence.

It was [launched two weeks ago](#), but the tool was temporarily stopped on EMIS systems last Friday following requests to pause it from the BMA because it was 'causing too much trouble' for GPs.



Tricky Areas ?

3rd party providers of Medical Information for Firearms licensing do I have to produce a SAR ?

The current consensus is that practices should produce a SARS and email direct to the 3rd party provider assuming you have a written consent to do so from the patient. You have 28days to complete this task. Although there is no obligation for the patient to pay for this we feel that as firearms licensing is a privilege and not a right and that this is not the intended use for SARS practices could ask but not insist for a fee to cover the time taken by staff to complete a sars

Can I object on moral grounds ?



Tricky Areas ?

Can I object to completing the medical information form on moral grounds ?

Yes if you hold strong moral objections to the carrying of firearms you can object to completing the form. We would strongly recommend another GP in your practice to do so or alternatively you can ask the patient / applicant to use a third party provider, most applicants will be aware of these these organisations have to use GMC registered Doctors to complete the application. However if the applicant is granted a firearms license you and your practice will be required to enter the appropriate Snomed code in the notes and you will be obliged to follow the legislation relating to flagging and alerts should the applicant develop a relevant medical condition.



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Useful resource [Kent Police website.](#)

[Kent LMC website](#)

[BMA The firearms licensing process](#)