

HARP Member Portal

Frequently Asked Questions (Updated April 2016)

1. I do not have a tablet. Can I still use the portal?

Yes. You can use the portal on any laptop, PC or tablet. If you do not have an electronic device which you can take to the meeting, there are a small number of tablets which the REC Manager can bring along to the meeting for you to use. The meeting documents will be pre-loaded to the device and ready for you to view.

2. There is no Wi-Fi in the room in which my REC meeting is held. How will I be able to view the documents electronically?

The application documents can be downloaded from the HARP Member Portal beforehand in order that you can save them to your electronic device and access them at the meeting. Clicking the 'download all' button allows you to download and save all of the documents linked to an application onto your electronic device.

3. I would like to review some of the documents electronically but I would prefer to receive paper copies of some documents such as the application form and Participant Information Sheets. Is this possible?

Yes. Some of the Committees who tested using the portal decided to receive a reduced dataset of documents. For example, one Committee opted to no longer receive paper copies of the protocol. It is easier for the REC Manager if this decision can be made as a Committee in order to assist with the photocopying and posting of meeting papers.

4. Can I review substantial amendments and Proportionate Review applications using the portal?

Yes. Some of the Committees who tested using the portal found it very helpful to use for the review of substantial amendments and Proportionate Review applications as it meant that there was no longer a need to receive large attachments by email.

5. How can I add comments to documents?

Comments can be entered next to each document in the portal. Comments entered into the portal can only be viewed if there is an internet connection therefore, for full Committee meetings you may find it more beneficial to insert notes and highlight

sections onto copies of the documents which have been downloaded and saved to your device. Information on annotating electronic copies of documents is available in the user manual. The lead reviewer sheet can also be downloaded from the portal.

6. What are the advantages of using the HARP Member Portal?

Applications can be accessed through the portal as soon as they are valid which means that some of the applications will be available to view much earlier than they would be sent in the post. This means that rather than receiving all of the applications at the same time, you have the option to read the applications as soon as they are ready throughout the month.

You can access the meeting documents anywhere, as long as you can access the internet. This means that you would be able to view the documents at home or at work without having to carry bundles of paper with you.

For Proportionate Review and sub-committee work, accessing the meeting documents via the portal means that documents don't need to be e-mailed to you and won't use up your inbox storage.

7. What are the advantages of viewing documents electronically?

Searching documents for key words is extremely easy with electronic documents and can save a lot of time. A whole document can be searched for a word or phrase in just a few minutes. Accessing documents electronically means that you will not need to carry large bundles of paper to the REC meeting.

Also, choosing to review applications electronically saves the NHS money and is better for the environment.

8. How do I know when there are applications and amendments available for me to review?

Your REC Manager will e-mail you when there are applications or amendments ready for you to review in the member portal.

9. Why doesn't the 'Download all documents' button work when I access the HARP Member Portal from my iPad?

Unfortunately, the download all documents button does not work when you access the portal from an iPad. However, it is possible to download an app called 'GoodReader' which will allow this function to work. The app cost £3.99 from the App Store and we will reimburse this cost if you provide the email receipt confirming your purchase or a redacted bank statement.

10. I am concerned about data protection and the security of accessing the Member Portal and downloading documents to my device. What is the advice from the HRA regarding this?

The HRA reviewed the information governance arrangements for members using the HARP Member Portal to view and download study documents as part of the user testing carried out last year. The HRA agreed to accept the small level of risk associated with members downloading documents to their own devices which is comparable to the risk of sending papers in the post and of members transporting paper copies to REC meetings.

We ask members to agree to the HARP Member Portal Terms & Conditions on their first login which sets out the expectations from members in terms of data security. The Terms & Conditions can be viewed at any time by clicking on your username when you have logged in.

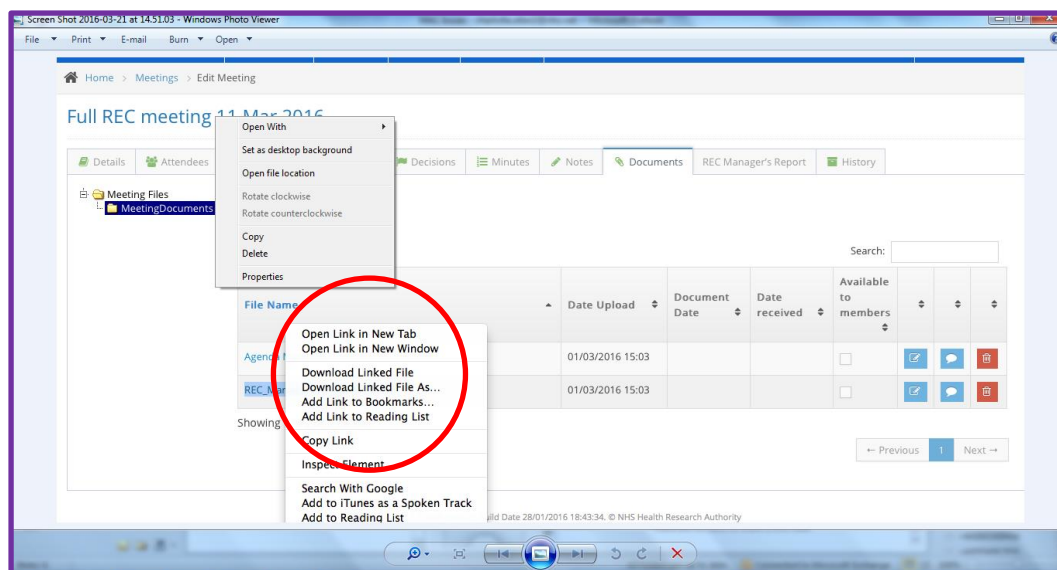
11. If I download documents to my device, when should I delete them?

The meeting documents should be deleted from your device as soon as possible after the meeting date. You will also need to delete the documents from your recycling bin (or Trash folder for Mac users). REC Managers can make the study documents available to you again in the future if you needed to refer to them again. For example, if you wanted sight of the original applications when reviewing a substantial amendment.

12. Is it possible to open the documents on the screen without them being downloaded?

Yes – documents can be opened without downloading them by clicking on the document name itself rather than the ‘download all documents’ button.

If you use a Mac it is slightly different as once you click on a document it will download straight into the ‘downloads’ folder. An icon appears to show this is happening. If you click this icon the document will open. Alternatively, you can right click on the name of the document and select ‘open link in new tab’ or ‘open link in new window’ (shown in the screen shot below). This still downloads the document but it opens up straight away in a new tab or new window.



13. Will downloading files use up my monthly data allowance?

The majority of broadband providers offer an unlimited data allowance so in most cases, downloading files from the HARP Member Portal is not going to affect your monthly data usage. Many broadband providers offer unlimited data usage for a very modest monthly fee.

The only circumstance in which using the Member Portal may affect your data allowance is if you were using a mobile phone data contract and using this to download documents. If you are using data allowance from a mobile phone contract to access the internet, it might be worth considering switching to an unlimited broadband package, particularly if you are likely to exceed your limit through day to day personal use. Downloading all of the application and meeting documents for a monthly full REC meeting uses approximately 10MB of data which is the equivalent of streaming a video for two minutes or uploading four photos to social media. Whilst accessing the HARP Member Portal and downloading documents does not use a significant amount of data to do, if you are concerned it may take you over your data limit then please discuss possible alternatives with your REC Manager.

14. Who can I contact for help?

Please contact your REC Manager in the first instance. You can also contact the helpdesk if you have queries regarding your account settings: helpdesk@harp.org.uk

The helpdesk service is not available on weekends therefore, we recommend that you check you can access the portal and view the documents during the week if you intend to review the applications during the weekend.