

## HARP Member Portal

### Frequently Asked Questions (Updated February 2020)

**1. Can I use the portal on any device?**

You can use the portal on any laptop, desktop PC or tablet device. If you do not have an electronic device which you can take to the meeting, there are a number of netbooks which can be loaned from the HRA. Please ask the Member Portal Development and Support Officer, Member Support Team, or your Approvals Support team (at the usual email address) and they will order one for you.

**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 and electronic Ethics Review Form can be downloaded from the HARP Member Portal beforehand in order that you can save them to your 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. Documents will always appear in the same numbered order, based on feedback from RECs, to make navigating the application as easy as possible. The first document will be the covering letter, followed by the IRAS form, followed by the Protocol and so on.

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

Yes. Substantial amendments and Proportionate Review applications can both be reviewed via the HARP Member Portal and this saves you from receiving large attachments by email.

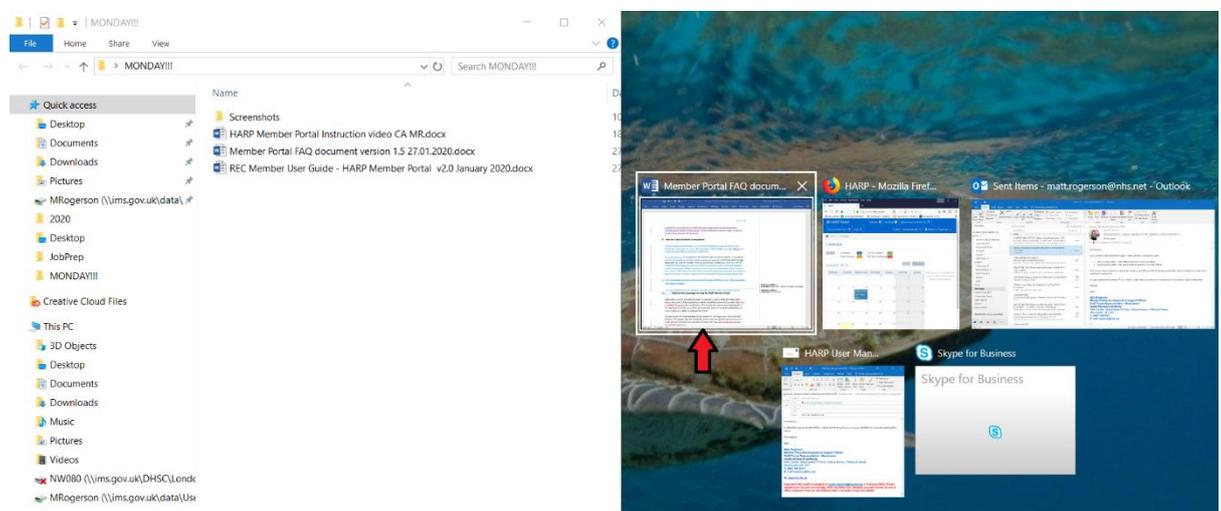
**4. How can I add comments to documents?**

For Full and PR applications you should use the electronic Ethics Review Form which is available in the Member Portal. You can use the online version which allows you to share your comments with other members and the staff supporting your REC in advance of the meeting or alternatively, you can use the Word version of the form which can be downloaded onto your device so it can be viewed without an internet connection.

For amendments, comments can be entered next to each document in the portal. Overall comments can also be added to each amendment. Comments entered into the portal can only be viewed if there is an internet connection.

## 5. I find navigating between documents and windows difficult, it isn't like comparing two pieces of paper.

You can navigate between windows and documents using the windows button on your keyboard. Hold the windows button and press any of the arrow keys on your keyboard. You will then see all the open windows and documents. Hover your mouse over the document you wish to view and click. It will then 'snap' into place and take up half of the screen. You can do the same to have another window fill the other half of your screen.



## 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 if they were 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. The portal has a secure, encrypted connection. Reviewing applications using the portal also allows you to share and view comments with other Committee members in advance of the meeting.

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. Just Press Ctrl + F and a dialogue box will appear. Enter a word or phrase, press Enter and the computer will find it for you.

Accessing documents electronically means that you will not need to carry large bundles of paper to the REC meeting.

Also, reviewing applications electronically saves the NHS money and is better for the environment.

#### **8. Is it really that much better for the environment?**

Yes! Committees can use up to 1 ton of paper per year. This is the equivalent to 17 trees, which will absorb 250lbs of carbon dioxide each year. In addition, this uses over 250 gallons of petrol, 4,000 kilowatts of energy, 3 cubic yards of landfill space and contaminates nearly 20,000 gallons of water.

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

Your Approvals Officer will e-mail you when there are applications or amendments ready for you to review in the member portal. You can also click on a meeting via the Member Portal calendar to see if there are any applications or amendments allocated to the meeting.

#### **10. 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 always 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.

When using an iPad, it is recommended that Firefox or Google Chrome is used as the browser as opposed to Safari.

**11. 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 initial user testing carried out when the Portal was first piloted. 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.

**12. Does the HARP Member Portal use cookies to collect data or track my internet use?**

The HARP Member Portal only uses cookies for authentication purposes only – for example so that if you refresh the page, you do not need to log in again. The portal does not use tracking cookies.

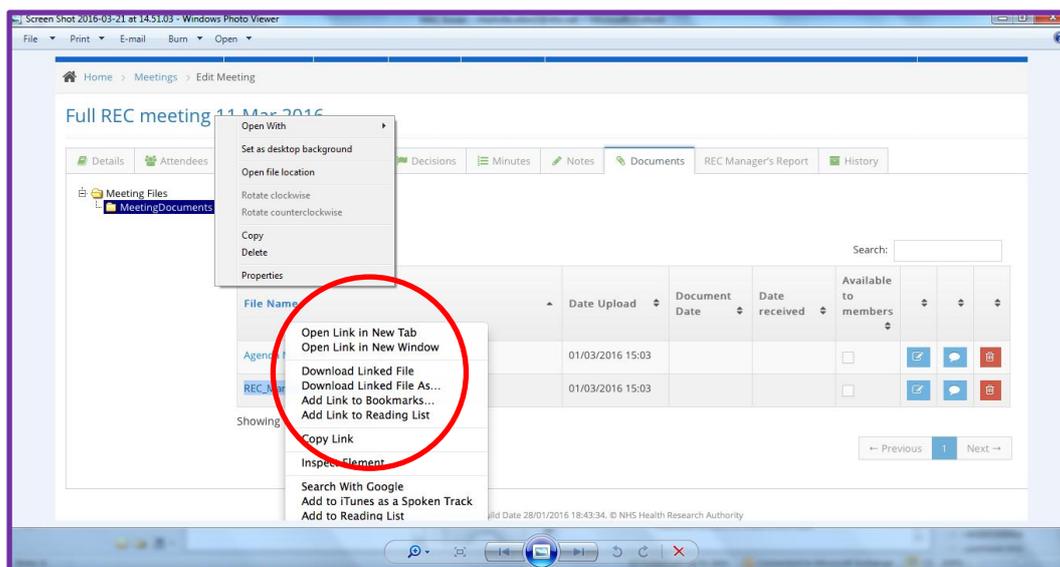
**13. If I download documents to my device, when should I delete them?**

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). The study documents will remain viewable in the Member Portal if you need to access them again. You do not need to delete comments which you have entered in the Ethics Review form as these are deleted automatically one month after a final ethical opinion has been issued.

**14. 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.



## 15. 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 the member of staff supporting your REC.

## 16. Who can I contact for help?

Please contact your Approvals Officer or the Member Support team at their usual email address in the first instance. You can also contact a HARP Member Portal Champion. You can also contact the helpdesk if you have queries regarding your account settings: [helpdesk@harp.org.uk](mailto: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. However, if you have forgotten your password you can request for a new password to be sent to you automatically at any time by clicking the 'forgotten password' option on the login screen.

There is a member Instruction Video, which covers all of the usual steps when using the HARP Member Portal. This can be found at the following link:

- <https://www.hra.nhs.uk/about-us/committees-and-services/harp/>