

Guidelines - Obtaining Consent to Submit a Case Report to THOR

Consent can be obtained either verbally or in written format - either is acceptable in legal terms, but most clinicians use a mixture as no "form" could cover all issues, and verbal explanation is almost invariably required in addition to anything that might be written. The important matter is that any consent is "informed" i.e. that the patient/volunteer understands what he/she is consenting to.

Areas which a THOR-GP reporter would cover with the individual to obtain informed consent might include:

- a brief introduction to THOR-GP (e.g. the patient info sheet)
- letting the patient know that any patient identifiable information will be removed from the report to the point where its extremely unlikely that anyone could work out who he/she is (e.g. removal of name, age, location, etc)
- advising that the info may be circulated to physicians who are THOR reporters either by email, in paper format, or posted on the password protected part of the website (giving the patient the option to say NO to either or both of these options). As cases are often of interest to reporters in more than one of the reporting schemes (i.e. THOR-GP and THOR), it is helpful if you could obtain consent for the case to be used for THOR-GP and THOR-Many thanks.
- making the patient aware that the THOR-GP team will not be sent any identifiable information about the patient (including any consent "form" that the reporter may wish to use, as this would have the patient's name on it)
- advising that the THOR-GP team does however require the reporter to state that informed consent has been received i.e. a statement to this effect
- advising the patient that he/she can choose to receive a copy of the case of the quarter report before we use it (this would be done via the reporter), and withdraw consent for its use if the patient wasn't happy for it to be used.

Many physicians have a "check list" e.g. 1-6 above (and any other items that THEY feel are important), and record that they have gone through such a checklist in the patient's notes.

Please do not hesitate to contact the THOR-GP team if you have any further queries in relation to patient consent.