**Firearms marker**

As of today, 6 July 2022, a new firearms marker has been introduced, aimed at providing alerts to GPs during both the application process and the lifecycle of the issued licence. This will integrate with EMIS and system one systems (Vision to follow) to prospectively flag patient coded as holding a firearms licence.

The BMA has had significant involvement in the development of the [Home Office guidance on firearms licensing](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/firearms-licensing-police-guidance) and we have been pushing for an active flagging system within patients’ records that is robust, clear and standardised across the country, and the new digital marker is a positive step in the right direction of improving the contribution GPs make to the licensing process.

We strongly support the Government’s overall message, that gun ownership is a privilege and not a right, and that firearms must be in the hands of only those who are deemed safe and responsible.

However, the public should be under no illusion that this will be an overnight solution. This new scheme will apply only to new applicants or people renewing their licences, so it will take up to five years before all licensed gun owners are included within this framework. The introduction of the marker must not imply that the buck for public safety stops with the GP; as the police have acknowledged, they themselves are ultimately responsible for firearms licensing.

As this new marker is rolled out, we encourage GPs to build on existing relationships with local forces to help further protect public safety.

We would like to thank Dr Peter Holden, Chair of the BMA’s Professional Fees Committee, for his hard work and ongoing commitment to this issue.

Read our guidance about the [firearms licensing process](https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices/gp-service-provision/the-firearms-licensing-process)

Read the full BMA [statement](https://www.bma.org.uk/bma-media-centre/digital-firearms-marker-on-gp-patient-records-is-positive-step-but-not-overnight-solution-says-bma)