

Simplifying search results to streamline health service staff response times



South West Commissioning Support

GPs are contractually required to provide primary care services to patients living within their catchment boundaries. HealthGIS GP Finder, developed by the award-winning HealthGIS Team, now part of South West Commissioning Support (SWCS), provides access to up-to-date, accurate registration information for both primary care support services and GP contract administrators.

The challenge

Quickly and accurately identifying patients within a specific GP catchment area, helps to streamline query response times, but requires search results that are easy to interpret. Additional information, such as the location of hospitals and pharmacies, also helps health service staff to provide added value to the public and GP practices.

The solution

Almost all patient data has an associated postcode and can, therefore be displayed on a map. As part of SWCS's HealthGIS, which provides mapping and spatial information via a web portal, GP Finder enables users to identify all practices where a patient can register simply by typing in their home postcode.



The results can be viewed on a range of familiar Ordnance Survey mapping – from 1:250 000 Scale Colour Raster to detailed OS Street View® – or printed as a list. Users can also quickly view results in relation to other services, such as hospitals and pharmacies, using the map portal interface. The service is easy to use and is available via any computer with access to the NHS® network.

In addition to the latest GP contractor information, HealthGIS GP Finder uses the definitive source of property and address information for England and Wales produced by GeoPlace®, a joint venture between Ordnance Survey and the Local Government Association. AddressBase® Plus contains current properties and addresses sourced from local authorities, Ordnance Survey and Royal Mail matched to the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) used to link and cross-reference associated information. It is supplied under the Public Service Mapping Agreement (PSMA), which makes Ordnance Survey geographic data free at the point of use for all local authorities, central government departments and qualifying health organisations in England and Wales.

OS OpenData™ products, Boundary-Line™; road atlas-style 1:250 000 Scale Colour Raster; and OS VectorMap® District backdrop mapping are also used.

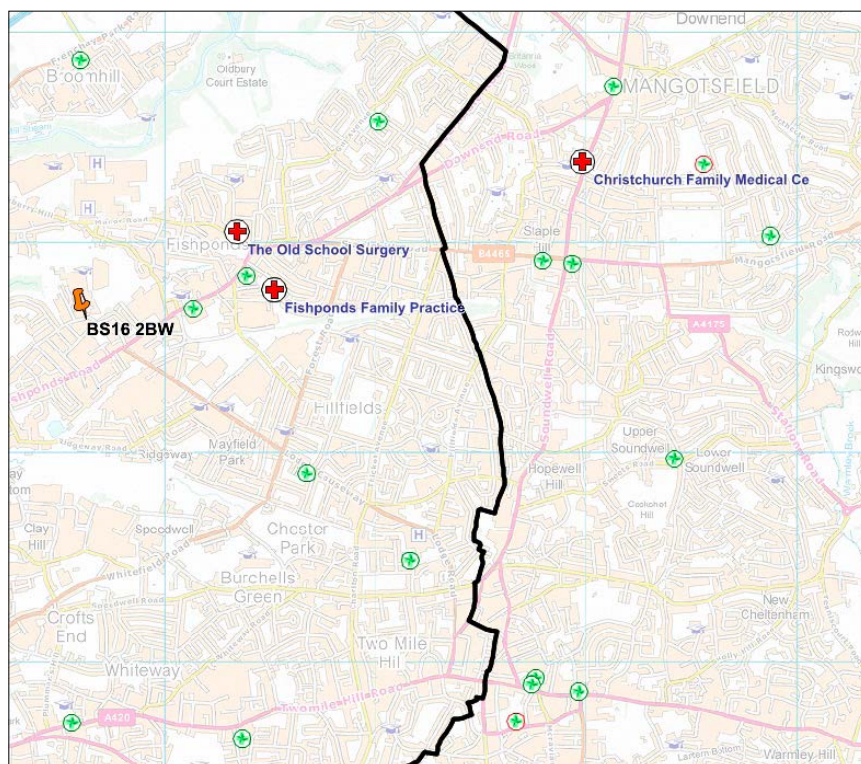
The benefits

- Delivers efficiency savings by streamlining query response times.
- Provides search results that are easy to understand and put into geographical context.
- Improves health services by enabling staff to provide information and respond to questions with confidence.
- Ensures results are always up to date through use of the latest GP contractor information and map data.

'GP Finder is used in a variety of ways within the Patient Data team. It helps us to provide accurate and fast responses to patients about GP practices with which they can register, including the practice address and telephone number, and even the distance between the GP practice and the patient's home address. This service is greatly valued by those patients who do not have access to the Internet – often the elderly or vulnerable, but also those who are moving house.'

'It is also an invaluable tool for the team when dealing with requests from GP practices to remove patients who have moved outside their boundary. It enables the team to quickly validate the request, as well as produce GP practice information for the new address which can then be sent to the patient.'

**Denise Williams, Patient Data Manager,
Avon Primary Care Support Agency**



Data products used:

- AddressBase Plus
- 1: 250 000 Scale Colour Raster
- OS VectorMap District
- OS Street View
- Boundary-Line

General information

www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/contactus

General enquiries

+44 (0)8456 05 05 05

Textphone

+44 (0)23 8005 6146

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