

## Learning and Development Special

April 2026

### Reasonable Adjustment Flag in NCRS: a practical guide for pharmacy teams

The Reasonable Adjustment Flag (RAF) is a national NHS Spine record that lets health and care staff record, share and view key reasonable adjustments for patients, so that care can be delivered in a way that is safe, accessible and person-centred. In NCRS, the flag can show that a patient needs adjustments, what those adjustments are, relevant Equality Act impairments, and who created or last updated the record.

For pharmacy staff, this matters because the flag can highlight practical needs that affect medicines use and service access, such as communication support, access to your premises, or support with medication management (including dosette trays).

#### Who can do what in RAF- Role Based Access

Access to RAF in NCRS is controlled through NHS smartcards and role-based access control (RBAC), usually managed locally by your organisations' RA agent. RAF access is governed by activity codes, and all activity is audited on Spine.

There are three main RAF activity codes in NCRS:

RBAC activity code	What this allows
B0264	See whether a RAF exists and <b>view</b> its content only
B0257	See whether a RAF exists, <b>view</b> it, <b>create</b> a new RAF, and <b>add content</b> to an existing RAF
B0380	See whether a RAF exists, <b>view</b> it, and <b>add content</b> to an existing RAF, but <b>cannot create</b> a new RAF

Role based codes are not automatically assigned based on your job description- so please check that you have the correct RBAC on your smart card for the work you do in your pharmacy.

If a member of your team needs access and does not currently have it, the next step is to contact your local RA agent (usually someone in your pharmacy or company) or the smartcard team.



Devon Smartcard Office:

Email: [d-icb.smartcards@nhs.net](mailto:d-icb.smartcards@nhs.net)

Tel: 01752 581913 or 01752 580309 or 01752 581903

[Smartcard RA's in other areas](#)

[CPE information about smartcards](#)

## What counts as a reasonable adjustment?

Under the Equality Act 2010, organisations have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services as fairly as everyone else. The legal basis is the **Equality Act 2010**, especially the definition of disability in **section 6** and the duty to make reasonable adjustments in **section 20**.

For RAF purposes, only create a flag where the patient is disabled under the Equality Act 2010. NCRS guidance says that, by creating a RAF, you are confirming the patient has an impairment with **substantial** and **long-term** adverse effects on normal day-to-day activities.

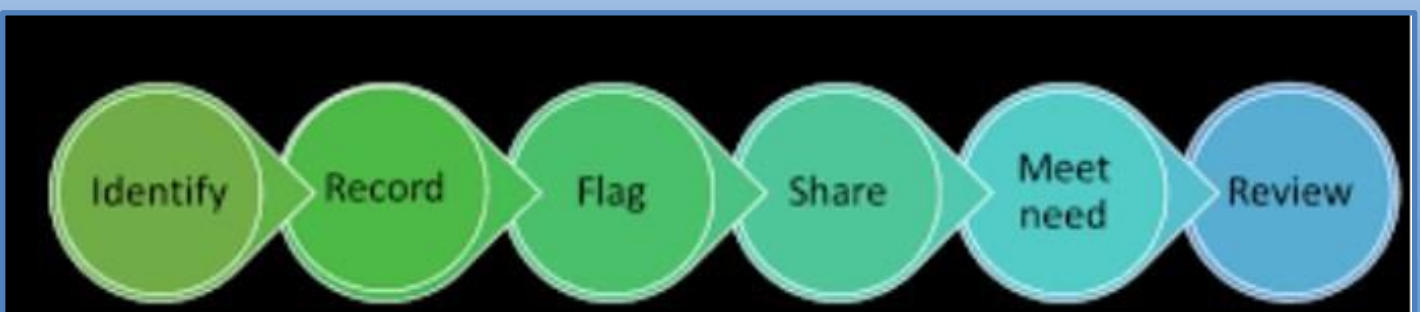
**PLEASE MAKE SURE INFORMATION ADDED IS ACCURATE**, as NCRS also automatically adds the SNOMED code “**Impairment with substantial and long term adverse effect on normal day to day activity (Equality Act 2010)**” (**1326341000000105**) to the patient record when a RAF is created.

In pharmacy practice terms, reasonable adjustments may include:

- communication support, such as large print leaflets or access to translation services if English is not spoken.
- quieter or lower-light environments for consultations.
- wheelchair access or other physical access arrangements.
- support for medication management including MAR charts, large font labels or monitored dosage systems.
- changes to local procedures, environment or staff approach so the patient can use the service safely and effectively.

Under **Section 6**, a person is considered to have a disability if they have a **physical or mental impairment** that has a **substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities**. “Substantial” means more than minor or trivial, and “long-term” generally means the impairment has lasted, or is likely to last, **at least 12 months** or for the rest of the person’s life. The definition covers a wide range of conditions, including physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, mental health conditions, and certain long-term illnesses.

**Section 20** of the Act introduces the **duty to make reasonable adjustments**, requiring organisations and service providers to take reasonable steps to remove or reduce barriers faced by disabled people. In healthcare settings, this means anticipating and addressing barriers that could prevent a patient from accessing services safely or effectively. Adjustments might involve changes to the physical environment, the way services are delivered, or the provision of additional support such as MAR charts or longer appointment times for services. The aim is to ensure disabled people can access services **as close as possible to the standard offered to everyone else**, rather than being placed at a disadvantage.



## Step by step - How to...

### Before you create a RAF

Before recording anything, make sure:

- the patient meets the Equality Act definition of disability for this purpose
- the information is relevant and necessary for direct care
- the flag is being created with the consent of the individual and/or carer, or in line with best interest process if consent has not been obtained (remember to document in PMR also)

there is not already a RAF in place for that patient- because NCRS will not let you create a second one Also remember that the RAF is **not** intended to be a full care plan or a full list of every issue. It should contain the key adjustments that other health and care professionals need to know at reception, referral, or when preparing to see the patient.

### Step by step: how to view a RAF in NCRS

1. Open the patient record in NCRS. The **Overview** tab appears first.
2. Look for the yellow banner stating **“Reasonable Adjustments present”**.
3. Select the banner to open the RAF.
4. Review the sections shown, which may include:
  - Reasonable adjustments to consider
  - Underlying conditions
  - Equality Act impairments to consider when making adjustments
  - Details of the user who created the RAF
  - Details of the user who last updated it
  - If a section has no content yet, NCRS still shows the heading and indicates that no data has been added.

Do not rely on printing from NCRS, because the feature has not been optimised for printing.

### Step by step: how to create a RAF in NCRS

You need the relevant RBAC permission on your smartcard, which is **B0257**.

1. Open the patient record in NCRS.
  2. Go to the **Patient** tab.
  3. Find the **Reasonable Adjustment Flag** section.
  4. Select **Create a Reasonable Adjustment Flag**.
  5. On the create page, select **Start now**.
  6. Record impairments if appropriate. More than one can be selected, and supporting text can be added.
  7. If the patient does not want the impairment recorded, select **“Patient would prefer not to say.”**
  8. Record the reasonable adjustments by choosing from the SNOMED list or using the search box. NCRS recognises common abbreviations such as **BSL**.
  9. Add short, clear supporting comments where needed. Comments can be up to 5,000 characters, but best practice is to keep them brief and understandable across organisations.
  10. For an adjustment that is not covered by the predefined list, use the bespoke option **“Requires reasonable adjustments for health and care access (Equality Act 2010)”** and add the detail manually.
  11. Review the information. You can go back and edit before saving. Make 100% sure information is documented accurately as other healthcare professionals will view and use information that you add.
- Select **Save and complete**.  
This confirms the Equality Act eligibility statement and creates the RAF.

### Step by step: how to edit or update a RAF in NCRS

In NCRS, “editing” a RAF is mostly done by **adding** new content or **deleting and re-entering** content. You cannot directly edit an individual impairment or adjustment once it has been saved.

#### To add new content

You need **B0257** or **B0380**.

1. Open the existing RAF from the patient record.
2. Select either **Add Reasonable Adjustment** or **Add impairments**.
3. Enter the new item.

Save the update.

Important rule: if **“Patient would prefer not to say”** has already been recorded for impairment, you cannot add an impairment unless that option is removed first. Equally, if an impairment is already recorded, you cannot switch to **“Patient would prefer not to say”** unless the current impairment entry is removed first.

#### To change an existing item

1. Open the RAF.

2. Locate the adjustment or impairment that is no longer correct.
3. Delete that item.

Record the corrected item again.

NCRS advises caution here, especially if the information was recorded by another user. It is recommended to contact the original user first if there is any concern about the entry. Underlying conditions cannot be added to or removed from NCRS.

#### To delete an item or the whole RAF

1. Open the RAF.
2. Select **Delete** under the individual impairment or adjustment or choose **Delete this Reasonable Adjustment record** to remove the whole flag.
3. Choose a reason for deletion.
4. Add supporting comments.
5. Confirm the deletion.

Deleting data should be uncommon and done carefully. Spine keeps an audit trail, and the original user is not automatically notified.

### Good practice for pharmacy teams when recording RAF content

For pharmacy team use, it helps to focus on adjustments that genuinely change how you provide medicines-related care. Examples include:

- needing plain language, written information, or communication support
- requiring a quieter consultation area



- requiring a quieter consultation area
- requiring wheelchair access or more time at the counter or in consultation room
- needing support with medication management or medication adherence systems needing alternative/remote appointment arrangements

The national guidance is clear that RAF content should be relevant and necessary, not overloaded with detail, and should avoid local shorthand that other organisations may not understand.

## Training for RAF: e-LfH and Learning Hub

NHS England's **Reasonable Adjustment Digital Flag** learning session is available through the NHS Learning Hub <https://learninghub.nhs.uk/Resource/48879/Item> (you will need a learning hub or open Athens log in to access here)

and is also available through the eLFH platform <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/reasonable-adjustment-digital-flag/> (accessible through CPPE account, or create a free account directly on eLFH if not a pharmacist/pharmacy technician)  
The programme is aimed at **all staff in health and social care**, explains the legal and ethical basis for reasonable adjustments, shows how the digital flag works, and is expected to take around **30 to 60 minutes**.

The training covers:

- why reasonable adjustments matter
- how the digital flag supports equitable care

- staff responsibilities for identifying, recording, flagging, sharing and meeting adjustment needs
- how the flag helps organisations meet obligations under the Equality Act and the information standard

For pharmacy teams, this is a useful baseline module for anyone who may view or contribute to RAF information in NCRS.

Pharmacy colleagues involved in assessing patients, record keeping or service delivery are advised to complete this training. We would also advise that you review your knowledge and competence around Accessible Information Standard (<https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/accessible-information-standard/>) and Mental Capacity Act (<https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/mental-capacity-act/>)

Registered professional should remember to record any learning and development for revalidation purposes.

## Key take-home points

- Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians do not automatically get RAF functions just because of their profession.
- In day-to-day use, RBAC **B0264** is for viewing, **B0257** is for creating and adding content, and **B0380** is for adding to an existing RAF but not creating the first record.
- Only create a RAF where the patient meets the Equality Act disability definition, and record only the key adjustments that will help other teams provide safe, accessible care.
- Obtain patient consent prior to making or adjusting a RAF.
- Document carefully, concisely and accurately



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