# **Patient portal expansion across the North West**

Over the past 18 months NHS colleagues across the region have been working in conjunction with the national NHS England team to extend the coverage and expand the functionality and impact, of patient portals in secondary care. This is linked to the wider Mobile First programme, which supports the roll-out of the digital citizen approach through:

**Navigation:** helping people access the most appropriate self-care information and services more quickly

**Appointments and choice**: help people to manage secondary care appointments, book a flu jab and improved referrals functionality

**Prescriptions:** increasing digital adoption of repeat prescriptions and digital tokens to collect a prescription from any pharmacy

**Record access:** allow patients to see new information as it is added to their health record; Pilot a new approach to proxy access to records and transactions

**DX Therapeutics:** condition-specific hubs where patients can access clinically assured digital therapeutics to aid well-being, starting with mental health

**Messaging:** secure and trusted messaging from GP practices and about appointments for vaccinations and secondary care referrals

The expectation is that all non-specialist acute providers have a portal, or on-line secure system, which patients will access through the NHS App. This is part of a wider focus on ensuring that the NHS App is developed for the benefit of patients and citizens. This is an exciting and transformational initiative and when deployed well and integrated with service models, patient portals can offer:

Patients

* A more consistent user experience which improves access, visibility and control for patients on elective pathways
* Curated local information, contact details and guidance in the NHS App for patients on elective care pathways
* A single point of entry digital ‘front door’ to NHS services through the NHS App

Clinicians

* Pre-consultation questionnaires in the NHS App to support delivery of consultations, reducing the volume of face-to-face appointments
* Mitigating patient health deterioration whilst waiting, through improved access to information and services
* Reduction in missed appointments through appointment reminder notifications in the NHS App, reducing unutilised clinical time
* Enables improvements in clinical outcomes

For hospitals

* Access to more patient led data to provide increased personalised care for patients
* New opportunities for digital communication; reducing unnecessary printing (large cost savings) and making information oriented towards a specific patient requirement; reduction in missed appointments by circa. 30%
* Patients are more informed about their care and associated waiting times, improving patient experience and satisfaction with health services

In addition, patient portals present an opportunity to reduce the administrative costs of care and enable a number of the key tactical and strategic objectives of the NHS in delivering transformed elective care.

NHS teams across the region are working together to agree local targeted condition pathways for deployment. These could be for the longest outpatient waits, the highest number of missed appointments and the greatest evidenced potential for reducing follow-up appointments. Pathways which may be suitable include:

* Hip and knee
* Headache
* Breast, prostate, colorectal and endometrial cancer
* Cataract
* ENT incl. tonsillectomy and myringoplasty
* Gynaecology
* Hernia
* Audiology
* Pain management
* Dermatology
* Inflammatory bowel
* Rheumatology

For more information, go to [Patient portal expansion across the North West](https://future.nhs.uk/NWOutpatientTransformation/view?objectId=42882768)