



digital first

Support and Resource Guide
South East Region
GP Practices

Optimise the use of digital technology in your practice

Support and Resource Guide for GP practices

This Support and Resource Guide has been developed to help GP practices across the South East region make the best use of digital technology, providing one platform to find and access key guidance documents, helpful hints and tips for use of digital tools in your practice and further information on NHS programmes. You can navigate through the resource pack using the icons below, and hyperlinks have been embedded in the document to take you to key guidance and helpful resources hosted online.

How to use this guide: Click on links or icons  to be directed to each section



Returns you to home page



Returns you to the previous page

Digital Capabilities



[Online Consultations](#)

[Video Consultations](#)

[OC/VC Case Studies](#)

[GP Practice Websites](#)

[Electronic Prescribing](#)

[GP Connect](#)

[NHS App](#)

Winter Preparedness



[Practice readiness](#)

[Flu Programme](#)

[Total Triage](#)

[Total Triage Case Studies](#)

[Supporting Remote Working](#)

[Patient Communications](#)

[Digital Support for Care Homes](#)

[Covid Oximetry at Home](#)

Digital Foundations



[Digital Literacy](#)

[Digital Inclusion](#)

[Managing your Appointment Book](#)

[Information Governance & Record Sharing](#)

[Digital First Supplier Matrix](#)

[Hands on Support](#)

Digital tools in General Practice

General practice sits at the heart of our NHS. It has pioneered the use of technology to deliver safe and effective care and has adapted to the needs of its growing and ageing population.

We know there is a strong desire among patients and clinicians for trusted and safe digital solutions that gives patients more control of their health, wellbeing and quality of life.

It is important to safely and securely integrate these digital tools and services into clinical systems and to ensure our services remain inclusive and accessible to all.

Caring for patients digitally has become a reality due to COVID-19 and this support pack has been developed to support practices to deliver digital tools in practice further enabling patients to get the right care when needed.

Digital solutions being utilised

Technology is already transforming the way Primary Care services are delivered, empowering patients, supporting stronger therapeutic relationships, developing effective and efficient teamworking across professional boundaries and creating networks and communities to support.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, online triage has become an enabler to ensure patients are receiving the right care when needed and to relieve pressures on practice staff. While not new for practices, online triage is now being utilised as the digital front door in many practices.

There has been a steady rise in utilisation rates of online and video consultation (OC/VC), which has quickly become a popular tool for practices and patients as it provides a convenient and secure alternative to phoning the practice or walk-ins, which during the COVID-19 pandemic have been largely avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Support and Resource Guide

General practice has achieved unprecedented service transformation throughout 2020 and its workforce has had to rapidly adapt to new ways of working, whilst managing increasing pressures on the service.

A huge amount of guidance material has been produced to support the primary care workforce with this transition, but sometimes the challenge is finding what you need across the multiple sources available. This pack aims to make that a little easier by bringing together a plethora of materials in one place in order to support practices and save time; all of the links have approved content from the listed organisations, regular review and updates will be provided.

Alongside this resource pack we recommend practice teams register for access to the national Digital Primary Care Future NHS site, which continues to share up to date advice and guidance and offers the opportunity to share challenges and best practice with colleagues on their members forum. You can request free access via the link below.

If you have any feedback on how this document can be improved, we'd love to hear from you. Send us an email at england.dfpcseast@nhs.net

Join the Digital Primary Care Future NHS site [here](#)

**While every effort has been made to include accurate and up-to-date information about legal requirements, IT infrastructure and other resources such as hyperlinked websites, knowledge and understanding are constantly evolving and being updated. Therefore, use the content of this support pack to learn more about how you can adopt or enhance your use of digital healthcare and weigh up the choices, information and guidance for your own circumstances. The content is not a substitute for national advice and guidance from professional or regulatory organisations. Inclusion of named agencies, websites, companies, services or publications in this book does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement.*

Digital Capabilities



Online Consultation

Online consultations allow patients to request advice, support or care via the GP Practice website or where integrated through the NHS App.

During COVID-19, the use of Online Consultations has improved access for patients without having to wait on the phone or visit the practice in person.

From a practice perspective, online consultations can enhance the practice's ability to effectively manage time and workload and improve staff satisfaction.

Patients can ask questions, report symptoms, submit administrative requests, discuss other information including the ability for a review of a known problem or condition and upload photos where appropriate.



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Implementation guides



Implementation Toolkit

A guide to implementing Online Consultations in your practice



Implementation Checklist

Highlighting key things to consider at each step of implementation

Practice processes

NHSE/I recommend implementing OC as part of a Total Triage model.



How to set up Total Triage



Appointment Book Template to support practice scheduling.

Improving utilisation



Clear signposting on practice websites can help increase uptake. Guidance on optimising your practice website can be found [here](#).

Support links



Provider Guides

Questions and answers about your Online Consultation system



Tips & Case Study

A useful overview of Online Consultation with background, overview and tips



e-consultation top tips

This document will provide you with quick easy tools to support delivering these services

Tips for managing demand

1

Set expectations for response times (in-hours & out-of-hours) that are feasible and according to safe clinical thresholds

2

A prompt initial response, even just letting patients know their consultation is being reviewed, leads to greater satisfaction and reduces follow up calls to the practice

3

Use pre-set response messages or questions that you can customise. Add links to advice on NHS.uk, send attachments or digital leaflets with your messages

4

A generic [Digital Triage Demand Calculator](#) has been developed to support practices to estimate and plan for demand across the week.

Video Consultation

Video consultations allow patients and clinicians to interact virtually. This allows patients to receive a face to face consultation without being in the same place as the clinician.

During COVID-19, the use of video consultations has improved access for patients by providing a digital channel by which to interact with practices. They can be used alongside other approaches to augment productivity e.g. online triage and messaging to avoid consultations when self care may be sufficient.

They give the ability to pick up on visual cues and carry out a visual examination and may offer advantages in building rapport and facilitating understanding through non-verbal communication compared to other remote consulting methods.

Patient guidance can be found, [here](#)



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Implementation guides



RCGP Video Consult Guidance
Principles for supporting high quality consultations



Information for GPs

This [guidance](#) provides some rules of thumb as to when Video is most appropriate

Support links



Video Consultation Skills
How to make Video Consultations easier, safer and better for patients



Top tips
For successful Video Consultation



Advice on setting up
Hear from a GP who uses video regularly

Group Consultations

- ✓ Group Video Consultations are an emerging model which can achieve a range of benefits for the practice and patients.
- ✓ They deliver care in online groups, consulting with patients who have the same or similar conditions where clinically appropriate
- ✓ A [case study](#) has been produced sharing their experience of introducing group consultations
- ✓ Access the Video Group Consultations Futures site for materials and resources, [here](#).

Tips for delivering video consultations

1

The decision to offer a video consultation should be part of the wider [system of triage](#) and management offered in your practice and should be based on clinical judgement

2

Consider the patient's level of confidence and access to technology and give them a choice of how to communicate. There's no need to use video if a telephone call will do

3

Use a private, well-lit room and ask patient to do the same. Introduce everyone in the room, even those off camera

4

Reassure the patient that the consultation is likely to be very similar to a standard one, and that the call is confidential and secure

Case Studies

In this section, you will find how areas across South East Region have successfully adopted Online and Video Consultation for their patients.

Getting the most out of Online and Video Consultation tools requires the practice team to embed new workflows, developing processes that are fit for purpose, facilitate the new forms of patient access, and are efficient for the practice. These case studies provide examples of how this can be achieved.

Full access to a repository of case studies can be found on the Futures site [here](#).

If you have a story to share to help others, contact our South East Region team to share your story – england.dfpcsoutheast@nhs.net

Implementing Online and Video Consultation



Video Consultation at Library House Surgery

- Find out how Library House Surgery in Chorley are utilising Video Consultation to provide better access for patients.
- Dr Colvin shares advice and guidance on getting used to offering Video Consultation to patients.
- Take a look at the video [here](#).

eConsult at Hedge End

- Discover how Hedge End Practice in Hampshire used Online Consultation to address the increasing demand for appointments with clinicians.
- Find the case study [here](#).

Closing the Digital Gap

- See the changes North and Mid Hampshire Integrated Care Partnership made in response to the challenges of COVID-19.
- Through the use of digital consultation tools N&MH were able to implement and adopt ways to support patients remotely (virtually) rather than through face to face appointments.
- Find the case study, [here](#).

AskmyGP, Witley Surgery

- Learn how Dr Triska and the team at Witley Surgery implemented a new service to boost patient access and satisfaction while reducing the burden on GP's time in Surrey Heartlands.
- Check out the link, [here](#).

Case Studies



Practice Websites

Practice websites are a great channel to communicate with patients and to signpost them to the care that they need.

Providing the option for patients to carry out some tasks online is not only convenient for them, it will reduce practice phone calls and appointments.

Online services such as ordering medication, fit note requests, new patient registrations and allowing patients to update their contact details can all play a role in saving time for practice.

National contact for support can be found , [here](#).

What do I need to do

Display the following information prominently on website home page:

- ✓ NHS narrative on coronavirus
- ✓ Links to NHS.UK and NHS111 online
- ✓ How to contact the practice during COVID
- ✓ Clear signposting to practice online services

Handy tips:

- ✓ Make sure your website is easy to navigate in order for patients to use it
- ✓ Look at your most frequent patient requests and see if you can signpost these services on your website to reduce traffic on practice phonelines
- ✓ Websites are a great way to provide self care resources for patients, make sure these are displayed prominently on your home page.

Tools to support

- ✓ NHS practice guidance for making more of your practice website [here](#)
- ✓ NHSx information on online presence and accessibility compliance can be found [here](#)
- ✓ GMC Guidance for doctors use of social media can be found [here](#)
- ✓ A toolkit that supports delivering social media for GP practices can be found [here](#)
- ✓ Hear a Nurses perspective on using Facebook to engage with patients [here](#)

Electronic Prescription Services (EPS)

EPS allows prescribers to send prescriptions electronically to a dispenser of the patient's choice known as their "nominated" dispenser.

Previously, it was only possible to issue an EPS prescription where the patient nominated a pharmacy or another dispenser. EPS had been most advantageous for patients who received regular medication and who tended to get their prescriptions dispensed at the same pharmacy most of the time.

Under Phase 4 of EPS, which has now been switched on for all EMIS and TPP practices, practices can use electronic prescribing even for those patients that do not have EPS nomination, making EPS the default method of dispensing nationally.

Support and Guidance

EPS



Patients without an EPS Nomination

Patients are given a token (patients may refer to this as a paper copy of their prescription) to present at a community pharmacy or Dispensing Appliance Contractor (DAC) to obtain their medication. This token will contain a unique barcode which can be scanned at any community pharmacy or DAC in England to download the prescription from the NHS Spine and retrieve the medication details.



NHS Digital EPS Guidance & Support

EPS4



EPS 4 background

NHS Digital piloted Phase 4 at GP practices and dispensers across England from November 2018, and the national roll-out started in November 2019




Paper Prescriptions

Paper prescriptions will continue to be available in special circumstances, but almost all prescriptions can now be processed electronically.

FAQ's

Should I use EPS?

Yes, all practices should be live or have plans to enable EPS for their Practice. This directive was communicated to Primary Care in March as part of the C-19 response.  Primary Care Letter

Can I enable EPS as a dispensing practice (EMIS)?

All practices can deploy EPS, but they are unable to process EPS prescriptions for their dispensing patients in their dispensaries, unless they deploy the EMIS Pro-script solution (EMIS only).

Can I enable EPS as a dispensing practice (TPP/Vision)?

TPP and Vision do not have an assured dispensary solution, however the Practice is still able to deploy EPS. The impact of this can vary depending on the number of dispensing patients.

What does it look like if you don't enable a dispensary solution?

An FP10 (paper prescription) will have to be printed for the dispensary. In TPP this is automatic by default i.e. overrides any EPS nomination. For Vision the user must intervene manually where a EPS nomination is present.

EPS 4 Support

Access information online to support your Practice with EPS Phase 4 - explore the link [here](#) to find out more.

GP Connect

GP Connect is a tool that allows different clinical systems to talk to each other via a standardised application programming interface.

The service makes patient medical information available to all appropriate clinicians when and where they need it to support direct patient care, leading to improvements in both care and outcomes.

GP Connect also allows for direct appointment booking and helps primary care organisations to share appointments with the Covid Clinical Assessment Service (CCAS), Extended Access Hubs and NHS 111 to meet targets set out in the GMS contract around direct booking.

NHS Digital are currently supporting practices to set up GP Connect. If you require support please contact the team, [here](#).

Support and Guidance

Begin using GP Connect



Guidance on how to set-up GP Connect

Find guidance on how to embed GP Connect in your services, [here](#). Or for 1-1 support contact the GP Connect Programme directly: gpconnect@nhs.net



Supporting clinical triage during COVID-19

For guidance on how GP Connect should be deployed to support effective triage during the COVID-19 response, please visit the link, [here](#).

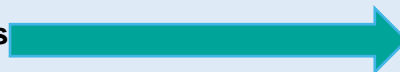
What is GP Connect? Watch a video online from NHS Digital



111 Direct Booking

- ✓ The GMS Contract 19/20 states “Practices must make available a minimum of one appointment per whole 3,000 patients per day for direct booking from NHS 111.
- ✓ The access record in HTML allows clinicians to view a read-only version of the patient’s detailed GP practice record – this is being shared with NHS 111 providers as part of the COVID response

However, as part of the COVID-19 response this has been increased.



COVID-19 Response – 111 and CCAS

- ✓ The number of appointments that should be made available for direct booking from 111 Services was increased in March 2020 to one per whole 500 patients per day, find further information [here](#).
- ✓ Demand for these appointments will vary nationally as the pandemic develops, but GP practices are urged to act in line with the [guidance](#) to ensure GP Connect functionality exists to help systems deal with any surges in demand.
- ✓ This uplift is in place until March 31st 2021. Further information can be accessed at the link, [here](#).

The NHS App

The NHS App provides a simple and secure way for people to access a range of NHS services on their smartphone or tablet.

There are now over half a million people using the App across the country and the NHS continues to update the services available.

The NHS App can help GP practices manage non-urgent communications with patients during the current outbreak. Secure messaging within the App allows practices to send a short message to the patient with the option for patients to reply.

Roadmap

The NHSx development roadmap for the NHS App can be found [here](#) with further information on planned future developments posted online [here](#).

What you need to know

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Practice Managers Course

- The Practice Managers Association (PMA) has worked closely with NHSX to develop this concise, interactive course which is free of charge.
- On completion, the PMA will award a certificate for the attained CPD points. You can access this course via the link [here](#).

Why Practices like it?

- ✓ A video highlighting the benefits of using the NHS App can be found [here](#).
- ✓ Details on the latest functionality via the App is listed [here](#).
- ✓ Information on getting started with the App, [here](#).



Using the App

- ✓ Patients can book appointments, order repeat prescriptions, gain access to records, and sign up for organ donation preferences.
- ✓ The NHS App is underpinned by NHS login (citizen ID). New updates for the App include online consultation integrations.
- ✓ The NHS has produced guidance for GP practices on the NHS App that can be found [here](#).

Promoting the App

- The NHS App is an important part of giving citizens access to services online and can be downloaded [here](#).
- A range of resources have been produced to help promote the NHS App with your patients [here](#).
- [Video](#): How to Register with the App.



Winter Preparedness



Practice readiness

GP practices will play a critical role in keeping the population well this Winter.

Whilst Winter is always a busy time for primary care services, this year is expected to be particularly challenging due to the added COVID-19 pressures, an extended flu vaccination campaign and an anticipated COVID-19 vaccination programme on the horizon.

Recognising the immense pressure that the Primary Care workforce is under, it has never been more important to look after staff health and wellbeing.

Resources are available not only to support practices prepare for the challenges ahead when delivering care for our patients, but also to support staff to take care of themselves and their colleagues.



Winter preparedness and resilience

Tools and Resources

- ✔ A Digital First GP **practice readiness checklist** has been developed to help support practice staff with making the best use of digital tools in preparation for winter
- ✔ At a time of unprecedented pressure on primary care, it is important to support each other's resilience and wellbeing. This podcast produced by Wessex LMC has been produced to support primary care staff with [resilience, when it all feels too difficult](#)
- ✔ The GMC has produced a wealth of resources focused on working during the pandemic, offering advice on leadership, looking after your health and wellbeing, working safely and supporting ethical decision making. You can find the guidance [here](#)
- ✔ When primary care staff feel well and supported, they can provide the best possible care for their patients. Hear tips from a group of GP practice staff on how they took steps to manage their mental health [here](#)

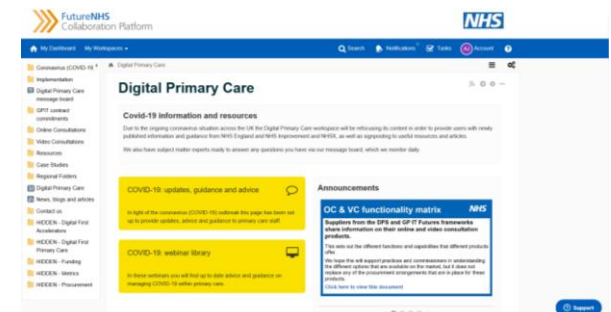


Support platforms

The NHS practitioner health programme has developed a platform that offers multiple videos to help support workforce wellbeing during COVID-19. You can find the platform [here](#)



The Digital Primary Care Future NHS site can also provide a helpful forum for peer support and guidance through the open networking forums. You can find the platform [here](#)



Flu Programme

The COVID-19 pandemic has added a layer of complexity for practices preparing for their flu vaccination programme this year.

Having to cover a larger portion of the population, the need for social distancing and use of PPE, managing vulnerable and shielding patient groups and depleted practice workforce and capacity, have all contributed to a more challenging task ahead.

This year, practices are finding innovative ways to support their patients in unprecedented circumstances and there are a number of guidance documents that have been produced to help practices identify the best approach for them.

Support and Guidance

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Tools available to support

- ✓ The seasonal flu programme is a long established vaccination programme proven to save lives and deliver a cost-effective prevention programme, along with reducing pressures on NHS services during the winter months. Find out more about the programme [here](#)
- ✓ A recording of the NHSx hosted webinar on how digital tools and resources can support your 2020 flu campaign can be found [here](#)
- ✓ The Public Health England flu vaccination guide includes information for children and pregnant women and can be found [here](#)
- ✓ National Seasonal Influenza Immunisation Programme 2020/21: primary care frequently asked questions can be found [here](#)
- ✓ PHE interactive e-learning to support training of all healthcare professionals involved in delivering or advising on flu immunisation can be found [here](#)
- ✓ Wessex LMC have put together a range of resources for the Seasonal Influenza Programme that can be found [here](#) along with their top tips for 20/21 [here](#)
- ✓ Trying a new approach for 2020 podcast covering Wessex innovative plans for running flu clinics this year. Learn what they did [here](#)
- ✓ 2020/21 Flu vaccination toolkit from the South East screening immunisation teams for practices can be found [here](#)
- ✓ Claiming reimbursement for reasonable additional costs for flu delivery can be found [here](#)
- ✓ Case study for using technology to transform the 2020 mass flu vaccination can be found [here](#)

Practice Technology

Video for delivering digital mass vaccination programmes can be found [here](#)

NHSE flu webinar

highlighting how you can harness barcode scanning technology can be found [here](#)

RCGP logistical guide

Delivering mass vaccinations during COVID-19 can be found [here](#)



Total Triage

A Total Triage model means that every patient contacting their practice is first triaged before making an appointment.

This model has been recommended by NHS England and Improvement during the COVID-19 pandemic as it minimises face to face contact with patients, but it can also improve efficiency within practices by ensuring patients are signposted to the right care, first time.

Total Triage can also be implemented as part of an e-hub model, pooling resources across a Primary Care Network to manage demand more effectively. There are a number of guidance documents available to support practices in developing the right Total Triage approach for them.

Access a Total Triage guide, [here](#).

Support and Guidance

Why do it?



NHS England and NHS Improvement asked general practice to move toward a [‘total triage’](#) model to reduce avoidable footfall in practices and protect patients and staff from the risk of infection



This means every patient contacting their practice should first be triaged before making an appointment, helping the practice to decide how they can best help each patient.


Guidance

How to implement Total Triage?

A guidance pack has been developed to support Practices make the change to Total Triage. This pack covers commonly asked Practice questions such as:

- ✓ How to manage patients remotely
- ✓ Turning off online bookable appointments
- ✓ Recommended workflow in Practice

Your CCG Digital First team can also help you implement this change, if you're not sure who to contact in your CCG, find out, [here](#).

 Handy tips & resources: Digital total triage clinical hazard log template.

eHubs

What is an eHub?

eHubs are an emerging model for delivering online consultations at scale across multiple GP practices. With an eHub model, consultations are processed by a centralised team.

Using the traditional online consultation model, individual practices receive and process consultations from patients on their list and the requests are dealt with by their own healthcare professionals and admin staff.

By moving to a centralised e-hub approach, practices can pool resources to manage demand more efficiently.

Lambeth CCG have provided a [case study](#) sharing learning from their experience implementing an e-hub model for PCNs in South East London.

Benefits



Improved patient experience



Saving time for practice



Improve staff morale



Increased flexibility & helps manage demand

Case Studies

In this section, you will find case studies and supporting guidance on the implementation of Total Triage.

Reported benefits have included improved resilience and reliability of services, improved access for patients and releasing more time to care as practices are able to prioritise appointments for those that need it most.

If you have a story to share to help others, contact our South East Region team to share your experiences – england.dfpcsoutheast@nhs.net

Implementing Total Triage

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Devon Accelerator

- Take a look at the Blueprint created by the Devon Digital Accelerator to find out how they rapidly scaled up 'patient triage first' using eConsult.
- Link to the blueprint can be found, [here](#).

HEE Guidance

- HEE have produced guidance for supporting Practice staff with Total Digital Triage for Online Consultation.
- Discover the step by step guide from HEE, [here](#).

Case Studies

Benefits for Patients & GP's

- The Digital Health and Care Alliance (DHACA) and AHSN Network hosted a series of webinars to explore benefits of the Total Triage model for patients and GPs.
- Clinicians and patients highlighted five main areas of benefit they are already experiencing. Find out more [here](#).

Tollgate – Total Triage

- The Tollgate Medical Centre are the focus of a national case study which details step by step details on the switch to remote clinical triage.
- The case study contains tactical guidance including how to implement changes in process flow, continuity of care, managing and safeguarding patients and more.
- Find out the details [here](#).



Remote Working

During COVID-19, significant numbers of general practice staff are unable to work from their normal GP practice base and practices have had to implement new ways of working to deliver care.

The shift to remote working – whether by choice or necessity – can be a significant change for any individual or practice.

Even a small disruption, like a new work environment or new software, can be unsettling, impacting an employee's confidence, productivity or motivation.

Guidance is available to support teams with this transition and advice has been provided on how to optimise remote working solutions.

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Digital technology has enabled a rapid transition to remote working in response to the pandemic, allowing practice staff to continue to provide care for their patients when they need it most.

Tools available to support



NHS Remote working guidance

A guide to help you with remote working during COVID-19 can be found [here](#).



NHSX Remote Vouching Guidance

Enabling remote vouching is even more important during the COVID-19 outbreak when minimising patient contact is required. A request for online access to additional services can come through during a phone call to the practice or the online consultation route. Find out how [here](#).



BMA advice

Advice for doctors in all settings in getting homeworking equipment, when to consult patients via video, approved NHS tools for remote consultations and tips for running them can be found [here](#)



GMC Remote consultation guidance

Guidance developed to manage patient safety risks and decide when it's safe to treat patients remotely can be found [here](#)



NHS Teams online support

A platform to help support staff to set up a teams meeting can be found [here](#).



Setting up a primary care hot hub

Learn how a region implemented a hot hub during Covid 19 to help support patients [here](#)



Total triage model

The total triage blueprint developed to support all practice touchpoints with patients can be found [here](#)



Patient Awareness

With COVID-19 resulting in significant changes to the way that primary care services are delivered, it is more important than ever to have clear and effective communication channels with patients, ensuring they know the best way to contact the practice and promoting digital and online services.

Well-established GP online services can be very beneficial to patients, allowing them to quickly access information at a time that is convenient to them. Patients are now able to access their medical history online, allowing them to work in partnership with healthcare professionals and increasing their involvement in their healthcare.

For the practice, effective patient communications with clear signposting can save the practice time, preventing the need for a visit or phone call to the practice.







Find patient information for accessing services online [here](#).

Promoting digital tools in practice










NHS Campaigns

The NHS [Health at Home campaign](#) signposts the public to useful information about how they can contact their GP, order repeat prescriptions, manage their wellbeing and existing conditions – without leaving their home.

Access to campaign resources for practices can be found [here](#) and you can access the below tools to support practice promotion:

-  **Patient access to general practice comms [toolkit](#)**
-  **A [video](#) on how to contact your GP remotely**
-  **NHS Online Consultation [patient leaflet](#)**
-  **A [patient facing guide](#) on video consultation**
-  **[Patient guidance](#) on accessing your GP using your smartphone, tablet or computer**
-  **Health at home [video and advice](#) for patients**

Top Tips (practice touchpoints)

-  Whilst speaking to patients, it can sometimes be an ideal time to signpost patients to digital resources, either during the conversation or as part of the follow up call or message.
-  During non working hours, messages should redirect patients to online consultation where appropriate
-  Signpost online services via email signatures and using out-of-office and/or automatic responses
-  Add text to the box on prescription slips promoting online consultation services
-  Promote online services prominently on the practice website landing page
-  Encourage all of the practice team to promote online services, at each interaction with patients
-  As often the first point of contact for a patient at the practice, ensure that your reception team are well informed about what online services can offer
-  Develop a script to support the team with signposting patients to the relevant online/digital channels
-  Train staff how to include messages promoting the service in texts, letters and emails to patients

Digital Support for Care Homes

COVID-19 is changing how patients access primary care services at care homes as many healthcare professionals are temporarily not able to visit their residents.

Through utilising digital tools, practices can ensure care homes continue to access advice, support and treatment for care home residents from a range of health and care professionals remotely.

Digital tools can help ensure patient information is sent and received securely as well as help facilitate remote monitoring, which can support clinical decision-making whilst maintaining the safety of care home residents and staff during the pandemic.










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

Remote Consultations

Practices have been asked to ensure delivery of consistent, weekly 'check ins', to review care home patients identified as a clinical priority for assessment and care. These should be delivered remotely wherever appropriate to do so.

-  Hear from a GP on how using Skype is enhancing the care provided to care home residents [here](#)
-  Using Skype with Care Homes a GP perspective can be found [here](#)
-  Guide for how to use Microsoft Teams to run a video group clinic can be found [here](#)
-  Cleveland Clinic Centre for Excellence in Healthcare Communication has developed a guide for empathy in virtual visits that can be found [here](#)
-  Guide to video consultations in nursing, residential, and care homes can be found [here](#)
-  Toolkit for GPs and GP practices on home visits and care homes can be found [here](#)
-  Watch the Digital Primary Care update- Care homes, vaccinations and social media [here](#)
-  The digital inclusion of older people in care homes can be found [here](#)
-  Heath Education England guidance for remote total triage for care and nursing homes can be found [here](#)



Supporting Care Homes

Often with multiple co-morbidities and multiple medication use, residents in care homes are often the most medically complex people in the community. It is important to ensure:

-  All residents from the assigned care home are registered with the GP practice
-  All care plans are complete and updated regularly with primary care team input
-  Ensure you are able to communicate with the care home team by video link
-  Maintain open communications with the care home team on non urgent concerns and queries

Proxy Access for Medications

Using Proxy Access, Care Home staff can now be set up to order online prescriptions on behalf of residents.

-  Full guidance on how to set up proxy access for medications management in care homes can be found [here](#)
-  NHS good practice example of using proxy access for ordering medications in care homes can be found [here](#)



Covid Oximetry at Home

Throughout the COVID-19 response, practices have adapted to rapid change, embracing new models of care that they can build on to enable the greater provision of proactive, personalised, co-ordinated and more integrated health and social care for their patients.

The Covid Oximetry at Home work (sometimes called a "virtual ward") describes an enhanced package of care for individuals with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 who are at risk for future deterioration.

This is one of the priority goals for the additional £150m General Practice Covid Capacity Expansion Fund and is already used in many areas to help detect earlier deterioration of people with COVID-19, both in the community and in care homes.



Support and Guidance

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Primary and Community Care

Evidence shows that the use of pulse oximetry can be used to detect early deterioration of patients with COVID-19 in primary and community care settings.

This document sets out principles to support remote monitoring of patients with confirmed or possible COVID-19 using pulse oximetry, It should be read alongside the general practice and community health services standard operating procedures and can be found [here](#)

Annex 2: which provides a remote monitoring COVID-19 diary can be found [here](#)

The NHS remote monitoring model within a Care Home setting includes regular check ins to review patients identified as a clinical priority for assessment and care; appropriate and consistent medical oversight from a GP; and for practices to have more frequent contact with care homes where needs are identified.

By remotely and consistently monitoring care home residents, GPs and practice staff can triage their care home patients and know when to intervene, reducing hospital admissions and increasing health system capacity

Supported by Wessex Local Medical Committees and led by Dr Matt Inada-Kim (HHFT) and Dr Karen Kirkham (Dorset CCG), [this webinar](#) offers an opportunity to learn from the experiences of four pilot sites and understand how this approach could be used to support service development.

Online Resources

- ✔ SE Wessex AHSN Covid Oximetry at Home Toolkit has been produced to help with:
 - What is Covid Oximetry at Home (or 'virtual ward'), and why should I set it up?
 - Six steps to setting up a Covid Virtual Ward
 - How will to identify its success
 - How to engage patients with a Covid virtual ward?

This toolkit also offers case studies and national guidance to deliver and can be found [here](#)

- ✔ A Clinician guide for using AccuRx in virtual wards can be found [here](#)
- ✔ Find top tips and lessons on how to deliver a Covid Virtual ward [here](#)
- ✔ Remote monitoring to support rapid assessment of vulnerable care home residents case study can be found [here](#)
- ✔ Supporting patients to self-monitor in the community settings case study can be found [here](#)
- ✔ Remote monitoring to support rapid assessment of vulnerable care home residents case study can be found [here](#)
- ✔ Virtual Ward – Service Description can be found [here](#)

Digital Foundations



Digital Literacy

As health information and services are increasingly delivered digitally, it is important to ensure that our primary care workforce is equipped with the necessary skills and competencies to support digital delivery in practice.

Digital literacy is about the ability for everyone working in healthcare being able to learn, work and develop effectively in a digital workplace and society.

By providing the necessary training, guidance and encouragement for practice staff to develop digital skills, we can improve staff satisfaction and confidence whilst improving the quality and accessibility of digital primary care services.

Learn more about what Digital Literacy is and why it is important in this HEE video [here](#)

Support and Guidance

Online Resources



- ✓ Health Education England has developed a [digital capability framework](#) to support the improvement of the digital capabilities of everyone working in health and care
- ✓ Digital Unite's [online technology guides](#) provide how-to guidance covering a whole host of digital topics.

What can I do?

- ✓ Work with staff across the varied roles within the practice to identify skills and training needs
- ✓ Consider nominating a champion from each staff group to encourage and support others along the transition
- ✓ Consider internal or external training sessions to improve the practice skills
- ✓ Ensure leadership is engaged with digital skills as a priority. Digital leadership is key to developing staff confidence and it's important to ensure staff feel encouraged to take up learning opportunities.

Digital Champions



Creating Digital Champions within your practice or PCN can be a great way to develop digital skills and promote a positive digital culture.

- ✓ Learn about how a Digital Champions approach was used to digitally upskill practice nurses in Staffordshire [here](#)
- ✓ Learn from a practice digital champion how they are using technology to help deliver patient pathways [here](#)
- ✓ Hear how a practice digital champion in North Preston felt more competent in utilising digital to increase patient participation practice campaigns [here](#)
- ✓ A new online training platform for digital health champions has been developed so digital health champions can understand and help overcome people's barriers to managing their health online. Find Digital Unite's platform [here](#).

Digital Inclusion

There is a clear and strong relationship between groups that are digitally excluded and those at greater risk of poor health. People from excluded groups or living in deprived areas often lack the skills, ability and means to get online.

As the health service is becoming increasingly digitised, it is important to ensure that services do not exclude those harder to reach groups or those patients that are less digitally literate.

Helping patients to access digital health services can help them to better manage their health and care, offer them a better choice and convenience of service, and improve their access to services reducing health inequality.

Access free courses for patients to learn digital health skills can be found [here](#)

Support and Guidance

Everyone Counts



- ✓ Ensuring individuals can access, understand, appraise and use information and services to make decisions about their health is key. Improving people's digital skills will enhance their ability to self-manage their health. Find out more about digital inclusion [here](#)
- ✓ Online consultations can offer an easier access point for some harder to reach patients like the deaf community or those with English as their second language. Patients at the practice highlighted in [this case study](#) reported being able to take their own time, felt less pressured (compared to a telephone consultation) and could request the help of a friend or family member to complete the online form.
- ✓ Some video solutions offer the ability to have a 3-way conversation between a patient, clinician and an interpreter, sometimes called video relay services. You can read more about the free service from BSL Health Access [here](#)
- ✓ Introduce practice champion volunteers to help improve access. They support service improvement, run groups for patients, help improve access to digital and improve digital skills and confidence. Find out more [here](#)
- ✓ Guidance on making online content accessible can be found [here](#)
- ✓ Find out what makes a video consultations good for your patients [here](#)

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Why do it?



12.6 million people in the UK lack basic digital skills and 5.3 million have never been online before. Learn how engaging with groups at risk of poor health helps increase digital inclusion [here](#)

Benefits



- Confidence in using online services will allow for patients to get the care they need when they need it
- Patients can self-care which can improve health outcomes
- Reduces health inequalities allowing for all patients to access care and communicate with the practice

The [Good Things Foundation](#) have produced case studies highlighting the benefits of widening digital anticipation [here](#)

Things to consider



- **Design** - not all digital services and products are accessible and easy to use, consider whether yours can be [improved](#)
- **Awareness** - not everyone is aware of digital services and products available to them, how are you [promoting](#) yours?
- **Staff capability and capacity** - not all health and care staff have the skills and knowledge to recommend digital services and products to patients and service users. Consider what [training needs](#) your staff might have.



Managing your Appointment Book

NHS Digital has been collecting data from GP appointment systems and publishing it collated by CCG area, since 2018.

This data provides a picture of general practice appointments and includes details such as the number of appointments, the healthcare professional carrying them out, and where possible, the mode of delivery, e.g. face to face, or telephone.

Rapid changes in the way that primary care services are delivered in response to COVID-19 has highlighted that not all clinical interactions are recorded in the appointment book, leading to underreporting of primary care activity.

A number of improvements are planned in 20/21 to improve GP Appointment Data and ensure we accurately capture the full scale of activity that general practice provides.



Support and Guidance

Recording appointments

To ensure all appointments are being recorded in general practice appointment books, and to fully capture the scale of work and workload in general practice, [guidance](#) has been produced that provides an agreed definition of an appointment, and asks general practice to start applying this now and systematically, as an important first step to improve data quality.



To find out more about the National initiatives to improve GP Appointment Data, visit the [programme webpage](#)

Why it matters for practices

It is in all our interests to accurately capture the full scale of scale of activity that general practice. For Practices and PCNs, ensuring that all appointments are recorded accurately will offer a number of key benefits.

- ✓ To better understand practice activity and workload across the month and during the year.
- ✓ To identify pressure points that need mitigating for the benefit of staff and patients.
- ✓ To plan deployment of extra and existing staff, as general practice undertakes its biggest ever workforce expansion.

Appointment Categorisation



400,000 slot types

Currently there are over 400,000 appointment slot types being used across the country.

As part of the work to improve GP Appointment Data, National appointment categories are being developed to enable better local and national understanding of the type of appointments being carried out.

Information Governance & Record Sharing

All providers of NHS care are required to have effective arrangements in place to govern the use of information in the delivery of patient care.

As collaboration is not new to general practice, practices have been developing stronger relationships with each other and with other care providers allowing for new ways of working. It will be necessary to ensure governance is in place for the protection of all practice staff and patients.

Record sharing allows for general practice organisations to access the right information to treat and predict the needs of patients, and supports the design of local services that meet these needs and improve patient outcomes.



Tools available to support



- ✓ NHS X has published [advice](#) which sets out some of the tools that doctors can use to support individual care, share information and communicate with colleagues during this challenging time.
- ✓ BMA Principles for sharing and accessing local shared electronic patient records for direct patient care can be found [here](#)
- ✓ NHSX Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) template can be used by all NHS/Social Care Organisations. The guide can be found [here](#) and a template can be found [here](#).
- ✓ This [Data Protection Impact Assessment \(DPIA\) template](#) has been produced, and partially completed, by the NHSE Digital First Primary Care assurance team to support Primary Care organisations, implementing Total Triage and Video Consultations through COVID-19.
- ✓ The General Medical Council have produced some guidance on confidentiality during the COVID-19 crisis [here](#)



- ✓ This [online portal](#) brings together national guidance on information governance with the aim of ensuring IG guidance is clear and consistent for those working in health and care organisations
- ✓ The Information Commissioner's Office has published a [statement](#) about how it will consider complaints about data protection practices during the pandemic along with resources that answer frequently asked questions.
- ✓ COVID-19 Information governance advice for IG professionals can be found [here](#)
- ✓ FAQs for information governance professionals can be found [here](#)
- ✓ Find out what GP practices need to do to comply with the national data opt-out policy, and provide your patients with appropriate information [here](#)
- ✓ Key Principles on for intimate clinical assessments undertaken remotely can be found [here](#)

Digital First Supplier Matrix

With the anticipated launch of the Covid-19 vaccine programme in early December, Primary Care are planning and preparing to undertake a National vaccine programme to immunise Patients against Covid-19.

This Programme will place a huge pressure onto the Primary Care workforce and alongside Locums & returners, there will be an expectation to increase the workforce in primary care to meet this challenge.

There are a selection of Digital First suppliers that can provide clinical capacity. This provides an opportunity for these suppliers to support the vaccination programme by facilitating a portion of the routine clinical work undertaken by Health Care Professionals currently, which will have the effect of releasing capacity back into the system.

An assessment of the Digital First market place has been undertaken with a focus on providers who can offer clinical capacity as part of their System(s). The functionality of these provider systems is detailed within the supplier matrix on the slide, across.



Supplier Matrix & System Feedback

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Supplier Matrix

System	Provider	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Provide Clinical Capacity	Known use within SE Region	1	2
Babylon	Babylon Partners Limited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Sussex	Web App	Mobile App
Livi	Digital Medical Supply UK Ltd	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	Yes	SHL, Sussex	Symptom Checker	Triage
Docly	MD International Ltd	✓	✓	⚙️	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes		Video Consultation	Appointment Booking
Q Doctor	My Med Ltd	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes	BOB	One-Way Messaging	Two-Way Messaging
Push Doctor	Push Doctor	✓	✓		⚙️	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes	BOB	9	⚙️
													Signposting	In development

System Feedback

- ✓ “Securing additional clinical support has undoubtedly boosted capacity, particularly in smaller practices, even if mainly to cover pressures from sick leave/self-isolation etc.– and reduced waiting times “
- ✓ “Bringing resources in-house to practices has reduced the issues of patient displacement that we may otherwise encounter if patients sign up to the broader online offers”
- ✓ “Additional clinical resource to support our online offer has helped enhance patient experience and sped up access to clinical advice in these difficult times”

Procurement

- ✓ The intention is that the upcoming Digital First OC/VC Framework will include scope for Clinical Capacity.
- ✓ If practices/PCNs/CCGs wish to explore these providers for clinical capacity further, the Procurement Hub are available support through the necessary process: commercial.procurementhub@nhs.net
- ✓ A full supplier matrix can be obtained by contacting the Procurement Hub or Digital First team, contact details can be found, [here](#).

Hands on support

If you or your practice team require support implementing digital services, you can access support through your local digital team in your STP/CCG.

We welcome any opportunities to work with you on developing a case study where we can share best practice with the rest of the region and have developed a case study template you can access below.

You can also contact us for any additional queries and a member of the team will be in touch.

england.dfpcsoutheast@nhs.net

Find case study template [here](#)

Key Contacts

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Programme Mailboxes

For Product or Programme specific queries, you can access support from the relevant programme teams listed below.

Programme	Contact
GP Connect	gpconnect@nhs.net
Electronic Prescription Services	EPSSupport@nhs.net
Online/Video Consultation/Total Triage	england.digitalfirstprimarycare@nhs.net
NHS App	england.nhsximplementation@nhs.net
Procurement	commercial.procurementhub@nhs.net
Managing your Appointment Book	england.gpad@nhs.net
Practice Website Team	england.nhsximplementation@nhs.net
Information Governance & Record Sharing	enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk

STP	Contact
Sussex	sxccg.facilitators@nhs.net
Surrey Heartlands	syheartlandsccg.gp-info@nhs.net
BOB	kamalbahia@nhs.net
Frimley	Please contact england.dfpcsoutheast@nhs.net and we will direct you
HIOW	Please contact england.dfpcsoutheast@nhs.net and we will direct you
K&M	kmccg.digital@nhs.net

