



# **Extended access to general practice**

**A guide to completing the extended  
access survey**

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## **Extended access to general practice: a guide to completing the extended access survey**

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Promoting equality and addressing health inequalities are at the heart of NHS England's values. Throughout the development of the policies and processes cited in this document, we have:

- Given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic (as cited under the Equality Act 2010) and those who do not share it; and
- Given regard to the need to reduce inequalities between patients in access to, and outcomes from healthcare services and to ensure services are provided in an integrated way where this might reduce health inequalities.

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## 1 Summary

1.1 The government's mandate to NHS England sets out:

“To ensure everyone has easier and more convenient access to GP services, including appointments at evenings and weekends”

1.2 A new general practice access collection has been set up to monitor the availability of pre-bookable appointments in general practice seven days a week. This was announced as part of the [2016-17 GMS contract](#)<sup>1</sup>.

Following negotiation, completing this survey will be a contractual requirement from October 2016. The amendments to the GMS contract will be published during October 2016 on the [Government website](#)<sup>2</sup>.

1.3 This document provides GP practice staff with information to assist them in submitting data to NHS England about their practice's offer to patients of enhanced access to appointments.

1.4 Practices will submit their information through the [Primary Care Web Tool \(PCWT\)](#)<sup>3</sup>.

Technical guidance on how to submit this data can be found on the PCWT itself.

## 2 Definitions

2.1 Definitions follow to help practices answer each question detailed in section 3 of this document.

Keyword	Definition
<b>Pre-bookable</b>	An appointment that is available on GP practice systems for booking by patients in advance. In advance is any time before the start time of the appointment.
<b>Appointment</b>	This is a scheduled slot with a GP, nurse or other member of general practice staff providing direct patient care.
<b>Early morning</b>	Early morning means before 08:00am on weekdays, Monday through to Friday.
<b>Evening</b>	Evening means after 6:30pm on weekdays, Monday through to Friday.
<b>At your practice (Q1-4)</b>	Extended access provided only to the practices' registered patients
<b>Group (Q5-9)</b>	A collaboration of GP practices set up to provide primary care services to their practices' combined registered population. An example of this is a federation.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nhsemployers.org/gms201617>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.primarycare.nhs.uk>

### 3 Data to submit

- 3.1 All GP practices are required to submit responses to two sets of questions relating to:
- i. the extended access services their practice provides and;
  - ii. the provision of the group of practices to which they may belong.

The first set of questions shown in Table 1 asks about extended hours offered at the **GP practice to their own registered patients**.

**Table 1 – questions about the practice**

#	Question
1	Do patients have the option of accessing pre-bookable Saturday appointments at your practice?
2	Do patients have the option of accessing pre-bookable Sunday appointments at your practice?
3	Do patients have the option of accessing pre-bookable early morning appointments (before 8.00am) during the week at your practice?
3a	If “YES” to question 3, on which weekdays does your practice provide pre-bookable early morning appointments? (Tick those that apply).
4	Do patients have the option of accessing pre-bookable evening appointments (after 6.30pm) during the week at your practice?
4a	If “YES” to question 4, on which weekdays does your practice provide pre-bookable evening appointments? (Tick those that apply).

- 3.2 The second set of questions is similar to the first set; however, instead of asking about the appointments available within the individual practice they ask about the availability of appointments to patients across the **group of practices of which the practice is a member**. The term ‘group’ encompasses several meanings; for example appointments could be provided by a federation or a network of practices in the local area.

**Table 2 - questions about the group of which the practice is a member**

#	Question
5	What is the name of the group of which your practice is a member, for example this could be the name of your federation?
6	Do patients have the option of accessing pre-bookable Saturday appointments through your group?
7	Do patients have the option of accessing pre-bookable Sunday appointments through your group?
8	Do patients have the option of accessing pre-bookable early morning appointments (before 8.00am) during the week through your group?
8a	If “YES” to question 8, on which weekdays does your group provide

#	Question
	pre-bookable early morning appointments? (Tick those that apply).
<b>9</b>	Do patients have the option of accessing pre-bookable evening appointments (after 6.30pm) during the week through your group?
<b>9a</b>	If “YES” to question 9, on which weekdays does your group provide pre-bookable evening appointments? (Tick those that apply).

- 3.3 Practices are required to answer both sets of questions. The combination of the sets of questions is aimed at giving a view of all approaches the practice has taken to providing their patients with enhanced access to pre-bookable appointments.
- 3.4 If a practice is not a member of a group, the practice should select ‘No group’ as the answer to question 5. In this instance responses will not be required for questions 6 to 9a inclusive.
- 3.5 In addition to the two sets of mandatory questions, there is one final question which is optional. Question 10 gives practices the opportunity to add additional comments, for example feedback on ease of survey completion or suggested improvements.

**Table 3 - comments**

#	Question
<b>10</b>	Do you have any additional comments?

## 4 Timeline

- 4.1 Submission of the extended access survey is mandatory as agreed in the 2016-17 contract negotiation.
- 4.2 Practices should respond to the extended access survey during the data collection window. The first data collection will be open from 3 October 2016 and all submissions must be made by close of the window on 31 October 2016.
- 4.3 Practices should provide information about the pre-bookable appointments that will be offered, or are expected to be offered, in the survey week. The survey week for the practice ordinarily being the week during which the collection window closes, as shown in table 4. If that week is exceptional for the practice, for example the practice is unexpectedly closed, then the practice should complete the survey using the nearest ‘normal’ week as their survey week.
- 4.4 The survey will be repeated every six months and it is expected to continue until 2020-21.

The timetable of future collections is shown in Table 4.

**Table 4 - data collection timetable**

Year	Collection window open	Collection window close
2016-17	3 October 2016	31 October 2016
2016-17	1 March 2017	31 March 2017
2017-18	1 September 2017	29 September 2017
2017-18	1 March 2018	30 March 2018
2018-19	3 September 2018	28 September 2018
2018-19	1 March 2019	29 March 2019
2019-20	2 September 2019	30 September 2019
2019-20	2 March 2020	31 March 2020
2020 -21	1 September 2020	30 September 2020
2020 -21	1 March 2021	31 March 2021

## 5 Submission Route

- 5.1 Practices are required to submit their survey return through the Primary Care Web Tool (PCWT). This system enables GP practices to submit data returns through dedicated modules and should be familiar to GP practices as it is already used for the annual practice e-declaration (eDEC) and the K041b Annual complaints data return. The module for the extended access collection is called Biannual Extended Access.
- 5.2 Users require an account to log in. The ability to view/edit and submit data returns is governed by specific permissions assigned to GP practice staff member accounts (usually senior partner and/or practice manager).
- 5.3 Permission to access the biannual extended access module has been granted to any GP staff member who has been assigned permission to the eDEC or the K041b collections. Users can complete the collection by selecting the “Biannual Extended Access User” role associated with their name.
- 5.4 New practice managers and/or senior partners should [register to use the primary care website](#)<sup>4</sup> They should also contact their NHS England local office with notification of their new role and contact details and request access to submit mandatory data returns to NHS England. This will enable account permissions and access to the extended access module to be authorised on time for the collection.

If you have any further questions about the extended access collection please contact the national NHS England Seven Day Access to General Practice team at [england.gpaccess@nhs.net](mailto:england.gpaccess@nhs.net)

For any other general enquiries regarding the Primary Care Web Tool please email [info.primarycareweb@nhs.net](mailto:info.primarycareweb@nhs.net)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.primarycare.nhs.uk/register.aspx>



## 6 Publication of the data

- 6.1 Results of the survey will be published every six months on NHS England's website, with the first publication expected to be available in November 2016. Information on individual practices and aggregated reports will be made available to the public.
- 6.2 Presentation of information is expected to include:
- A. Data Collected. For each GP practice the publication will show:
- The response to each question;
  - An extended hour's classification for the practice. Each practice will be placed in a group calculated based on the answers provided, for example "full extended access".
- B. Aggregated reports. Nationally and for each CCG a report will show:
- Number and % practices cross-tabulated by extended access category;
  - Number and % registered population cross-tabulated by extended access category;
  - Number and % practices who submitted data;
  - Number and % practices who are included in the measurements.
- 6.3 A secondary indicator called 'Primary care access' will also use this information. It will be published on MyNHS as part of the CCG Improvement and Assessment Framework (CCG IAF). This will show the proportion of practices in a CCG that provide full extended access.

## 7 Validation

- 7.1 Data will be extracted from the PCWT on the first working day after the collection window close date. Practices will be able to input or amend their submission up to the collection end date but will not be able to alter the information provided once the collection window has closed.
- 7.2 NHS England local offices (formerly area teams) and fully delegated CCGs in your local area will be able to monitor the collection and identify which practices have submitted or not as well as view submitted content. Contracting teams at NHS England local offices and fully delegated CCGs will not check or sign off the data prior to the collection end date. Practices should therefore ensure the content submitted is accurate.
- 7.3 The PCWT module is designed to minimise data quality issues. Most questions are multiple choice with only certain responses available for selection; for example 'Yes' or 'No'. Practices will not be able to submit the survey until all mandatory questions are answered.

## 8 Questions

- 8.1 For any queries about obtaining access to be able to view/edit and submit the return please contact your NHS England local office.
- 8.2. For any questions about the collection itself, for example clarification of the survey questions, please contact [england.gpaccess@nhs.net](mailto:england.gpaccess@nhs.net) or your NHS England local team.
- 8.2 For any other general enquiries regarding other areas of the Primary Care Web Tool please email [info.primarycareweb@nhs.net](mailto:info.primarycareweb@nhs.net)