

## Patient Online - registering patients for online services

### Why do it?

There are **many benefits** to patients or their carers when they register for online services.



Practices with more patients registered for online services receive **fewer phone** calls and face-to-face transactions with patients, which releases time for reception and administration staff to be deployed on other tasks.



Patients with internet access **will use the online services** available to them.



This will **free up phone lines** for patients who still wish to contact the practice using the telephone, and **transfer valuable resource** from the traditional contact channels (phones and face to face), to other essential tasks within the practice.

#### What if:

Patients find it **difficult to register** with the provider.

You receive a **high number** of requests for online services over an intense period of promotion.

#### Please do:

Provide **guides** to include actual system screen shots for your patients. System suppliers should help with this.

Always **advise patients of the timescale** for their request to be processed. Consider the registration for transactional services as the first step as this does not involve the clinician/authorised person to review the record.

## How to do it?



**Promote and encourage** patients to register for online services by:

- Creating a wall display using the new promotional materials (order them for free: [www.england.nhs.uk/materialsforpatient/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/materialsforpatient/))
- Update your website with clear links from the home page, consider how the online services link is worded for example include a banner “Save Time-Do It Online!”
- Use digital banners for social network pages – Twitter, Facebook: [www.england.nhs.uk/materialsforpatient/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/materialsforpatient/)

Encourage reception staff to ask every patient (at least face to face, and at quiet times on the telephone), **if they have access to the internet**; also promote the apps that are available for mobile phones or tablets.



Introduce a “**floor walker**” during morning and afternoon surgery, encouraging patients who are waiting for their appointment to register – some practices have found **PPG members** and apprentices are a useful resource for this.

Include it as standard in **new patient registration packs**.

**Targeted campaigns**, or specialist clinics, for example, flu campaign, mother and baby clinics, baby immunisation clinics (register mum as proxy for baby, and mum for her own online access).

**Identify target groups** of patients:

- Those who telephone regularly for test results.
- Patients who email the practice for repeat medications.
- Patients who request medications via web forms for example “My Surgery”.
- Patients who collect paper prescriptions – “do you use internet”, or attach a “flyer”.
- Patients who regularly ask for vaccination history – (practices with a high student population report this is an area of high demand).
- Patients who regularly DNA (do not attend).
- Consider the approved forms of ID verification – patients who attend without ID, where reception staff cannot self-vouch as they are not known, can have a clinician “professionally vouch” for them during their consultation – amend the registration document to make this easier and quicker for the clinician.

Create an efficient way to **contact target groups**, e.g. verified email address; SMS; “flyer” on the back of a paper prescription; face to face whilst attending surgery etc.

Change **telephone answer message** – “You can book/cancel your appointment / order repeat prescription, view test results etc., online.....reasons why.”

Configure the system to enable patients to **pre-register online** – this stage does not register the patient for online services, however it can simplify the process in most cases.



## More information:

- E-mail [england.patient.online@nhs.net](mailto:england.patient.online@nhs.net) or visit [www.england.nhs.uk/patient-online](http://www.england.nhs.uk/patient-online)
- <http://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/patientonline>