

## **Important Update: GP Appointment Changes from April 2026**

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From 1 April 2026, all GP practices in England must follow new national rules under the 2026/27 GP Contract. These changes affect how we respond to both urgent and non-urgent medical requests.

As a result, routine (non-urgent) appointments may take longer to access.

What's Changing?

- All urgent medical requests must receive a same-day response
- Practices can no longer ask patients to "call back tomorrow"
- Urgent cases must be assessed and managed on the same day

What "Same-Day Response" Means

A same-day response does not always mean a same-day appointment

It may include:

- Clinical advice
- Referral or signposting to another service
- Self-care guidance
- Prescriptions or medication changes
- Appointment booking (if clinically necessary)

How Our Practice Works: Full Clinical Triage

We use a clinical triage system, which means:

- Every request (online, phone, or in person) is reviewed by a clinician
- Your symptoms and medical history are assessed
- We decide if your issue is urgent or non-urgent

Important:

What feels urgent to you may not be clinically urgent based on medical assessment.

- Urgent cases → same-day response
- Non-urgent cases → booked for a later appropriate date

This ensures patients with the greatest need are prioritised.

Why Routine Appointments May Take Longer

Because we must:

- Respond to all urgent cases the same day
- Prioritise urgent care

This means:

- Fewer routine appointment slots
- Longer waiting times
- Appointments based on clinical need (not request order)

Some conditions may also be directed to pharmacies or other services where appropriate.

Why These Changes Are Happening

The NHS aims to:

- Ensure urgent cases are dealt with quickly
- Reduce pressure on hospitals
- Improve same-day access to care

These are national changes, not decisions made by individual practices.

How You Can Help

- Use online services for non-urgent issues
- Visit a pharmacist for minor illnesses
- Use NHS 111 when the practice is closed
- Contact us early if your condition worsens

Thank You

We understand these changes may be frustrating, but they are required nationwide.

Our team remains committed to providing safe, effective care.

If you have questions, please get in touch — we're here to help.

April 2026