



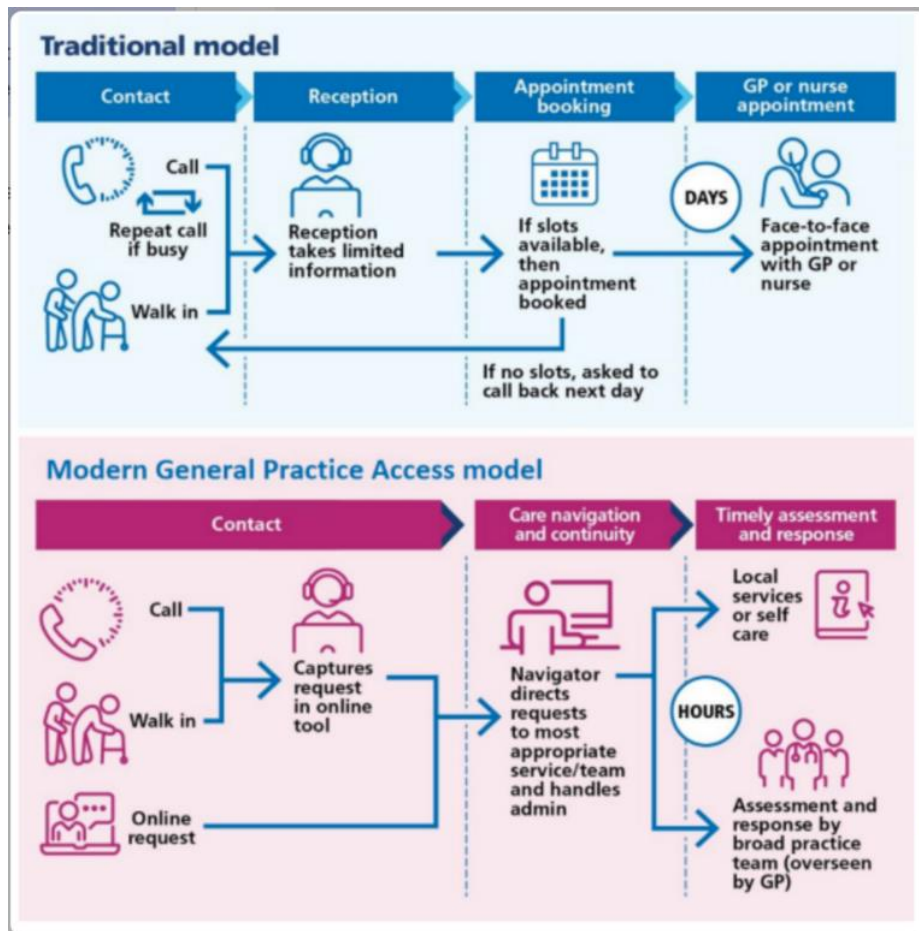
Total Triage Appointment Booking System Information & FAQs

The practice operates a 'total triage' model of care. This is the recommended model for practices nationally as it enables requests to enter through a single workflow whilst matching the approach for providing care to the person, the circumstance and their needs.

What is total triage?

Total triage is the approach recommended by NHS England to improve accessibility to Primary Care services. The main objectives are to enhance the quality of care our patients receive, to ensure that they are given the most appropriate appointment or advice to meet their needs and that this is done in a timely way.

Total triage means that every patient contacting the practice first provides some information on the reasons for contact. Patient queries are then triaged by a senior clinician in order to decide on what the most appropriate mode of care delivery is for that patient and to enable care to be provided by the right healthcare professional with the right level of urgency.



Why the change?

Traditionally, patients would book appointments to visit the practice in person. Over the last few years, we have been offering telephone appointments where appropriate and convenient for our patients too. However, the demand for appointments has increased hugely in recent years and primary care has faced an unprecedented level of patient need in



the context of a national recruitment crisis for both clinical and non-clinical staff. Whilst we have worked very hard to maintain service provision, it is more important than ever that the right problem is dealt with by the right person to ensure we can provide our patients with the safest and most efficient service.

What does this mean for patients?

We ask our patients to use an online form to contact the surgery wherever possible. This will apply to anything you would normally call the surgery about; including to book a routine or urgent appointment, request a prescription, to let us know about changes to your treatment or medication, to follow up results, update your contact details or any other administrative or clinical queries. This ensures your request is directed to the right team and managed in the safest and most efficient way. You can submit two types of request forms:

- Medical Requests – for new or ongoing symptoms, which will be triaged by a GP.
- Administrative Requests – for things like fit notes, letters, test results or routine care requests for certain specific planned services (see below).

What does the form look like?

The form is brief, and completely confidential. It asks you the following questions:

- What your query is about
- What action you would like
- Your preference for who or when you would like to deal with your problem.
- You will be invited to submit photos if relevant (e.g. for a rash)

You can watch a video about how to submit your form here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EDwg-feeUI&t=0s>

What times can I contact the practice?

You can submit a medical request form for new or ongoing problems between 7am- 3pm, Monday to Friday.

Administrative queries (such as doctor's letters, sick note requests, referral follow-ups or repeat prescriptions) can be submitted at any time, the website will be open 24/7 for these for your convenience. However, please remember the practice is only open from 8am- 6.30pm Monday to Friday and so if you submit administrative queries out of hours, we will only be able to respond during opening hours.

You can also submit a Routine Care Request via our online administrative form at any time for the following services:

- NHS Health Checks
- Cervical Screening (Smear Tests)
- Long-Term Condition Reviews (e.g. Asthma, COPD, Diabetes)
- Monitoring Blood Tests (for medication or long-term conditions)
- Medication Reviews
- Travel or Routine Vaccinations (such as Shingles or Flu)
- 6-Week Postnatal Checks
- Smoking Cessation Support



However, routine care requests are not triaged by a GP and are subject to eligibility criteria (for example, age, medical history, or timing since your last check). These must not be used for new or ongoing symptoms. We will respond to routine care requests within 2 working days.

△ If you have a new or ongoing medical problem, you must submit a Medical Request form so that a GP can triage your care appropriately.

You can still telephone or visit us in person at any time during our core opening hours which are Monday to Friday from 8am-6.30pm (excluding bank holidays).

What happens after my form is submitted?

Administrative queries and routine care requests will be dealt with by our patient services team in the usual way.

All medical requests will be screened by the doctor and categorised according to urgency of need. It may be possible to deal with your problem directly without the need to see a clinician. Alternatively, you may receive advice about self-care, other services you can refer yourself to or signposted to another suitable local service where it is clinically appropriate and safe to do so. Depending on the nature of the request and your preferred method of contact, we may call you to confirm your appointment booking or alternatively send you a link to select and book an appointment at a time convenient to you.

For patients who require an appointment at the practice, we will have appointments available within different time frames, including on the same day though these are reserved for matters of urgent clinical need only.

As well as offering GP appointments, following GP assessment, some patients will also be directed to other clinicians in the practice such as one of our clinical pharmacy team, practice nurses or a first contact physiotherapist.

By ensuring that patients reach the right person in a timely way, our clinicians will be available to answer your questions, provide clinical advice, and offer prescription renewals much more efficiently than before.

What if my problem is urgent?

You should still submit an online medical request form. Please do so as early as possible on the day to ensure your problem can be dealt with by our urgent care team.

If our triage GP assesses your query as urgent, you may be offered a same day appointment with our urgent care team. Urgent care is provided by a multidisciplinary team comprising of paramedics, advanced nurse practitioners and duty doctors.

Please be advised that same day appointments are limited to one problem per consultation in order to address medically urgent concerns only. Following triage you will be booked with the most appropriate healthcare professional to address your clinical need. Please rest assured that our urgent care team work under GP supervision at all times.

What if a patient is housebound, elderly, or not able to use online systems?

We recognise some vulnerable patients cannot use the online form. In order to ensure no patient is digitally excluded and all patients have equal access to our services, our phone



lines are still open or you can come in to our surgeries in person. Should you call us or visit us in person, our patient services team will either assist you to complete the form, or complete it on your behalf. We also have hard copy 'privacy slips' that can be completed by hand at front desk and passed on the triage doctor confidentially should you prefer.

Can I have a face-to-face appointment?

We understand the importance of face-to-face appointments for many patients. Total triage ensures that the practice makes the best use of these, with GPs and other clinicians. Often telephone consultations are convenient and work well both for patients and clinicians, and we have facilities to view photographs sent from your mobile phone which can be extremely helpful to support best care where appropriate, however we will continue to offer face-to-face appointments when required and for patients who prefer to see us in person.

Can I still request to see my usual GP?

All registered patients have a usual doctor who is assigned to oversee their care and support. We recognise that continuity of care is important and routine appointments will always be offered to you with your usual GP (or alternatively another doctor at your branch surgery in their absence) in the first instance. All patients have the right to express a preference of doctor and we will do our best to accommodate preferences wherever possible and where this is not possible, we will explain why.

Please note that for urgent (same day appointments) we are unable to accommodate requests for specific clinicians as this will depend on who is on-call on the day.

How does this benefit patients?

We understand that change can sometimes be difficult, but we are confident that total triage will bring many benefits to our patients. For example:

- Improved access to care: total triage has been shown to reduce waiting times and it enables us to attend to your medical needs more promptly, whilst ensuring your safety at all times. By using remote consultations, where appropriate, we can free up face to face appointments for those patients that need them. Additionally, when patients who are able to use our online forms do so, this reduces waiting times on the phone, making it easier for vulnerable patients who really need to get through on the phone.
- Convenience: using digital communication will mean that you can engage with us from the comfort of your home or workplace. No more having to travel to the practice and possible long waits for simple enquiries or prescription renewals. If you haven't already, please download the NHS App or make your requests online by filling in an online questionnaire. Assistance with the setting up the NHS App is available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/nhs-app-help-and-support/getting-started-with-the-nhs-app/>. The App is the fastest way to submit repeat prescription requests and will allow you to view upcoming appointments (including GP and hospital appointments) as well as access other services including 111 online.
- Enhanced patient experience: We are committed to providing you with the best possible care at Guildowns Group Practice. Total triage improves communication and ensures that you see the person best able to help you, in a timely way.



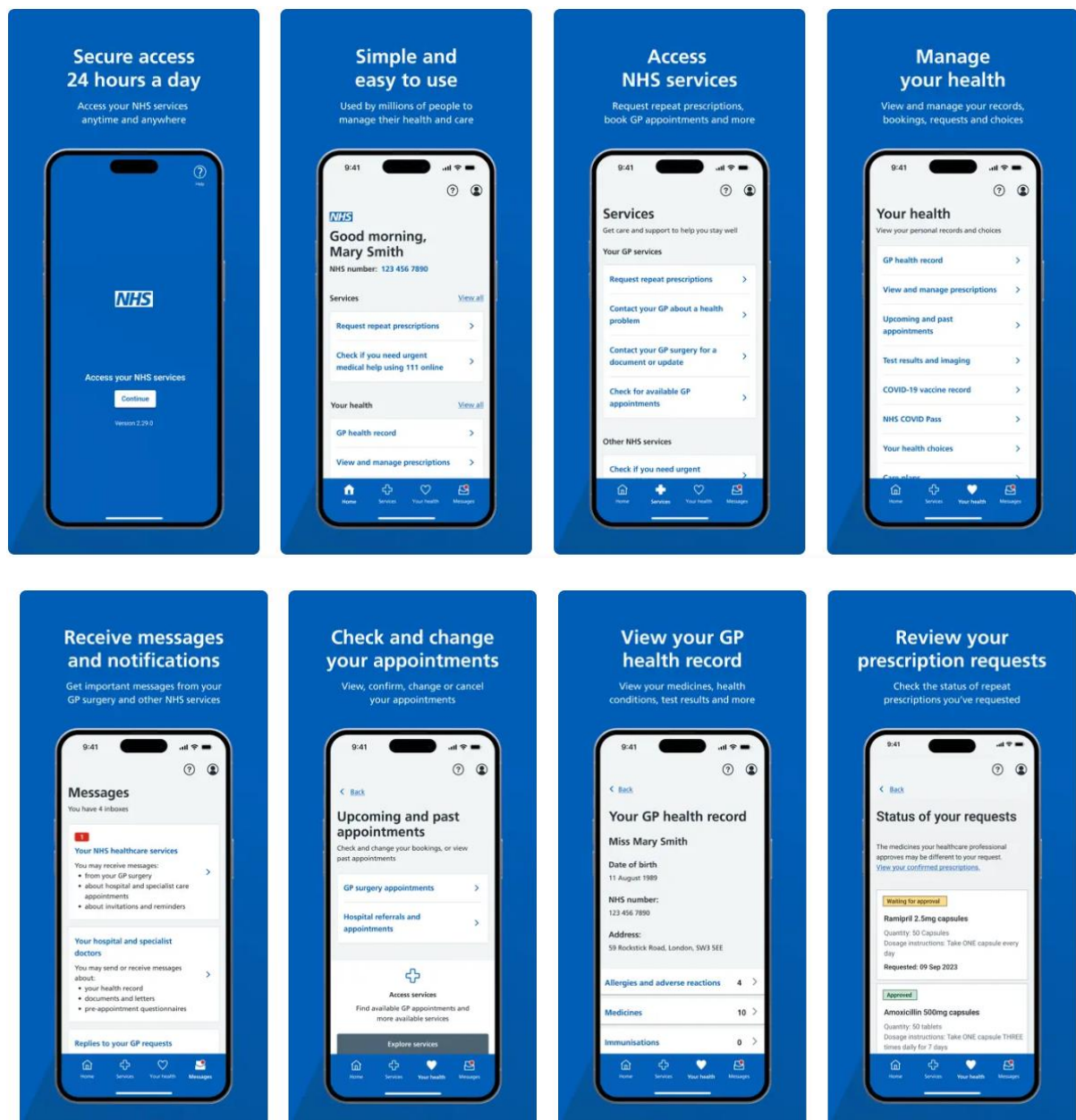
What else can I do online or via the NHS app?

- Submit a request for an appointment, view upcoming appointments and cancel appointments
- Request a doctor's letter (please note this may incur a fee if classed as private work)
- Request a sick note
- Ask questions about a referral
- Review test results
- Access self-care advice
- Request repeat prescriptions - for simple repeat prescriptions we advise patients to use NHS app, this is the quickest way for us to process your request.

Our online medical and admin query forms are available at:

<https://florey accurx.com/p/H81010>

The NHS App is available on iOS and Android





What if I have trouble using the system?

We are here to support patients and their families and carers with our booking system and are happy to provide additional support to those patients who are unable to use online resources. Our team is here to guide and support you every step of the way.

Questions or concerns

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

If you would like to be more involved in discussing changes at Guildowns you can join our Patient Participation Group, please visit the PPG page on our website:

<https://www.guildowns.nhs.uk/service/join-our-patient-group/>