

# Patient Online

Frequently asked questions – Patients



## **What is Patient Online?**

Patient Online services will give you the option to:

- Make appointments online
- Order repeat prescriptions online
- View your own medical record online

You will be able to complete these actions using a computer, tablet or smartphone rather than having to phone or visit your practice.

## **What are the benefits of online services?**

Online services will allow you to book and cancel appointments or request repeat prescriptions at a time that is convenient to you – day or night. It can also mean not having to travel to the surgery and can free up phone lines for people without access to a computer.

Having access to records means, that you could be more in control of your health and well-being. This is particularly helpful for people who live with a long-term condition such as Diabetes that needs regular monitoring and frequent prescriptions.

Practices tell us that online access helps to manage appointments and telephone calls more efficiently and patients find it convenient and accessible.

## **Why are you doing Patient Online?**

The NHS has consulted with individual patients and patient groups over the last four years. Many patients have said that they want to see their records, want to be more involved in their own care and wish to be involved in deciding on the best way they are treated and cared for. Patient Online is part of making this happen. Online services are an additional way of accessing services for those patients who want it.

## **How can I get access to my GP Record?**

Generally, you will need to fill in a short form and bring proof of your identity into your GP surgery so that they can provide you with logon details and with a password. Please speak to your practice who will advise you how to do this.

## **How can I be certain that no one else can get access to information from my GP record?**

Only you will be given access to your record.

When you sign-up to Patient Online, you will be given a secure login and a password. These details are unique to you and, along with your personal information, will not be shared with anybody else unless you choose to let them see it. This is not different to how you would access other online services, for example banking.

## **Where is my information stored?**

Patient information is stored within the IT system your general practice uses and within the practice paper records.

## **Will my carer be able to see my record?**

If you want your carer to see your record this can usually be set up for you. Please contact your practice to talk about what you need to do.

## **How will you avoid patients being forced or misled into providing access to their information?**

GPs will look at each request for access to a record and do everything they can to make sure they are genuine and not being made under pressure. Sometimes it is in the patient's best interests for a relative or carer to have access and this is also something that will be looked at on a case by case basis at practice level.

GPs are able to refuse or withdraw access to a record if they have concerns.

## **If I don't have a computer, tablet or smart phone what will it mean for me?**

Online services are an extra option for those who wish to use them and will not replace other ways of contacting your practice such as by phone or in person.

By freeing up phone lines and reducing the need for people to visit in person, it is hoped that patients who don't have a computer will find it easier to contact their practice.

## **Is there any help in getting started on the internet?**

There are a number of different services for people who want to get onto the internet. Many are provided by local authorities, colleges and charities. The best place to start would be your local library.

NHS England is also working with the Tinder Foundation on supporting people who want to make better use of the health information that is available on the internet. You can find out more on: [www.tinderfoundation.org/what-we-do/uk-online-centres](http://www.tinderfoundation.org/what-we-do/uk-online-centres)

For further information about Patient Online go to: [www.england.nhs.uk/patient-online/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/patient-online/)