

**Triage Hub**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**When will it start?**

Our Triage Hub will start reviewing all clinical requests from the 3rd July 2024.

**How does it work?**

* The new process applies **however you contact us** – online (via Patchs on the NHS app or our website), in person or by phone.
* You will have to provide the same information and this will be reviewed by **our Triage Hub** – a skilled team including GPs and Advanced Clinical Practitioners.
* If you can, please **complete your request online** as this will free up the phones and our staff for patients who need more support.
* If you ring us the questions will be asked by an automated system called **Telephone Assistant**, or a member of our reception team.
* If you visit the surgery, you’ll be asked to **fill in a paper form** and if you’re unable to do this yourself, a staff member will help you.
* Staff in our Triage Hub team may contact you to ask for **more information.**
* Once our Triage Hub team decides the best option, **you’ll be contacted** either to make an appointment, or be provided with advice and guidance. You may also be directed to another service that is more appropriate for your care.
* **We will contact you** by phone or by sending a text message.
* The online form submission for clinical requests will be available **weekdays from 8am.**

**Why is the practice making these changes?**

* Avoids the 8am rush
* Reduces phone calls so phones are available to those who can’t access online
* A fairer system which isn’t first come first served
* A safer system where we can prioritise appointments based on need
* A more accessible system where there are different ways to contact the practice. Those who are able to access online can, and the phones are quieter for those who can’t access online
* More continuity of care – if you have discussed an issue before it will be easier to book with the same person again, so you don’t have to repeat the same information
* More choice – for routine appointments there will be more choice about the day and time of your appointment, and whether you see someone face to face, or speak on the phone.
* Increased confidence from patients with requests reviewed by our Assessment team
* Reduced abuse for our reception team
* Increased efficiency e.g.
  + Get more information before giving an appointment e.g. if you need a blood test we can arrange this first
  + Seeing the most appropriate health professional – it may not always be a GP [#RightCareFirstTime](https://youtu.be/FiH-pDos0BE?feature=shared)

<https://youtu.be/FiH-pDos0BE?feature=shared>

**I’ve made a request, what next?**

Your request will be shared with the Triage Hub who will assess all clinical requests. We will aim to get back to you within 24 hours, it is likely to be on the day. All urgent requests will be dealt with on the day.

* We may contact you to get more information – this could be a phone call, or we might send a message via PATCHS, or a questionnaire

Once your request has been reviewed:

* If you need an on the day appointment, we will call you to book.
* If you need a routine appointment, you will be sent a link to book, or we will call you.
* Other information may be sent out around selfcare, referrals to other services etc

**What is Telephone** **Assistant?**

Telephone Assistant is a way of collecting the information about your health and your request.

You can submit your request on the phone without waiting in the phone queue. The answers will be submitted to the practice and added to Patchs so they can be reviewed by the Triage Hub.

**What do I do if I can’t access online?**

You will still be able to phone and come into the practice. If you come in, you will be asked to fill in a paper form. On the phone you can either use Telephone Assistant or speak to our reception team.

**What about people whose first language isn’t English?**

PATCHS offers a translation service online. There is more information on the practice website. [What-is-Patchs-Translate.docx (live.com)](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.practice365.co.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2Fsites%2F299%2F2024%2F04%2FWhat-is-Patchs-Translate.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

You have to select the language you want to use. There are 30 languages to choose from.

**Will I get an appointment on the day?**

Urgent clinical requests will be seen on the day, or occasionally you might be seen the following day.

If your request is not urgent you will be offered an appointment within the next 7 or 14 days depending on the urgency. You will be able to choose from appointments on different days, and times. You will be able to see who the appointment is with.

You may be directed to another service or health professional if they are the best person to see you [#RightCareFirstTime](https://youtu.be/FiH-pDos0BE?feature=shared).

You may be given advice to selfcare.

**I’ve made a request, why haven’t I got an appointment with a GP?**

All requests will be sent to our Triage Hub where a GP will decide who needs to be seen and when.

For some requests there may be a better person to see than a GP e.g. our practice pharmacist, a physio, or community pharmacy, or you may be given selfcare advice. [#RightCareFirstTime](https://youtu.be/FiH-pDos0BE?feature=shared).

It is very important that you provide accurate information on your request. If your symptoms change, or get worse, you can contact us again.

**Why do you close clinical Patchs requests?**

Our Triage Hub team need time to review and assess the requests that have come in. We need to close Patchs to give them time to work through these requests before the end of a working day.

You will still be able to submit Admin Patchs requests – sick notes, prescriptions, reports, referral updates etc. Any clinical requests sent through the Admin Patchs will be rejected.

**What do I do if Patchs is closed for clinical requests?**

If you think your request is medically urgent and cannot wait until the next day you can call the practice. You will still have to provide information to allow us to assess your request and you may be offered and appointment on the day if clinically appropriate.

If your request can wait until the next day, please submit an online request from 8am the next day when Patchs will open again. The practice opens at 8am.

**Who is looking at my request? / Who is in the Assessment Hub?**

Our Triage Hub is clinically led and made up of a trained and skilled team including GPs, Advanced Clinical Practitioners, and our reception team.

**Why do I need to provide this information?**

The information you are providing is the same as you would provide if you saw a GP. It will support the Triage Hub team to make sure you are seen appropriately, and the information will be shared with the Health Professional who sees you.

**What if I don’t want to use PATCHS?**

You don’t have to sign up for PATCHS, you could provide information as a Guest, complete a paper form or use the Telephone Assistant. All the requests, regardless of the way they come into the practice, will be recorded on PATCHS. This is now part of our clinical system and is in line with guidance from NHS England.

**What if this new system doesn’t work?**

We know it won’t be perfect especially at the start as everyone (patients and staff) gets used to the new way of working.

We have visited other practices where this is working well, and we are confident that this will be a better and safer system for everyone.

We will continue to review and take feedback from patients and staff to ensure we can provide the best service possible, with the funding and resources we have.

Please be aware that this is a challenging time for our staff, and we appreciate your support and understanding.

**What about nurses’ appointments?**

The Triage Hub is only for GP requests. Nurse appointments can be booked by our reception team, or via a link if you have been sent one.

If a request comes in that is appropriate for our nursing team to deal with it will you will be booked in, or you will be sent a link to book.

Our nursing team work includes: bloods, vaccinations, long term condition reviews, health checks, blood pressure.

**What is an Advanced Clinical Practitioner?**

Our ACPs are highly trained members of our team with master's level education. They have the expertise to expand their range of care to better help our patients.

**What is an Admin Patchs request?**

This includes things that do not have to be done by a GP or ACP including:

* Prescription requests
* Queries about referrals
* Reports and subject access requests

We will also accept sick note requests through Patchs Admin, and you can request an appointment with our nursing team.

**More information:**

**Healthwatch:** [Primary care recovery plan – what does it mean for you and your loved ones? | Healthwatch](https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/blog/2023-05-15/primary-care-recovery-plan-what-does-it-mean-you-and-your-loved-ones)