

Information about your telephone appointment with a clinician

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

A telephone appointment has been requested by your clinician. This is conducted over the telephone instead of requiring you to attend one of our hospital sites. It is just as important as a face-to-face appointment, and your clinician will want to talk with you about the same things by telephone as they would face-to-face.

Why am I having a telephone appointment?

Your clinician has recommended a telephone appointment because they would like to discuss your condition with you and have advised that they do not need to physically see you to assess you.

What will happen?

You will be sent an appointment letter with the date and time of your telephone appointment.

If you have been given a telephone appointment, please DO NOT come to the hospital as you will not be seen. Your healthcare professional will phone you at your appointment time.

The clinician delivering the appointment will call you as close as possible to your appointment time. The number may appear as 'no caller ID' or a number you do not recognise. If your telephone does not accept withheld numbers, please contact us ahead of your appointment.

We apologise if there is any delay with your telephone appointment, but due to the nature of these clinics, delays may occur, and we ask for your patience. If you have not received a call more than 60 minutes after your allocated appointment time, please call the Trust's switchboard on 01271 322577 and ask to be put through to the department on your appointment letter.

How should I prepare for my appointment?

Please be sure that:

- You have contacted us in advance if your telephone does not accept withheld numbers
- You are available to speak to the clinician at your appointment time and that your phone is loud enough to hear when it rings
- You have a list of all your current medications (prescribed and non-prescribed) and any documentation relevant to your condition or appointment
- You have a pen and paper ready to write down any notes
- You are somewhere quiet and free from distractions. This should be a place where you can talk privately without background noise such as televisions, radios and pets.
- You are in a location that has good mobile signal if we are calling your mobile number
- You have written down a list of any questions you want to ask, so you don't forget them

We try to keep our leaflets as up to date as possible, but sometimes we need to make changes quickly. For the latest information, please go to our website www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk

Please contact the department if you require any specific communication support or other relevant assistance for this appointment. You are welcome to have a partner, carer or significant other present during the telephone appointment.

Which phone number will you call?

The hospital department may have called you to confirm your telephone appointment and the number you prefer to be called on.

If you are unsure which number the clinician will call you on, please call the hospital department. Their number will be on your appointment letter.

What happens if I can't hear the clinician clearly?

Please inform the clinician straight away. If there is a different number, they can call you on, please tell them.

You are welcome to have a partner, carer or significant other with you during the telephone appointment, and you may find this helpful if you have hearing difficulties.

What if I need to change or cancel my appointment?

If you are unable to attend this appointment, please notify us at least three days before your appointment date by contacting us using the details on your appointment letter. This will allow us enough time to offer another patient the appointment slot.

What happens if I miss my appointment?

Please ensure you make every effort to attend your appointment. One missed appointment costs the NHS around £160.

Some of our services have appointment reminders, so you may receive text messages or phone calls to remind you about your appointment. If you wish to opt out of this service, please contact the department on the booking letter.

If you do miss an appointment the clinician will decide on the next step, which could include re-booking your appointment or discharging you back to your GP.

What if I don't want my appointment to be by telephone?

Your clinician has recommended a telephone appointment after considering a number of clinical factors, and also taking into account what they know about your individual communication needs.

If you feel a telephone appointment is unsuitable for you, please don't hesitate to contact us using the phone number at the top of your appointment letter. An alternative consultation can be discussed with your clinician, which could be a video or face-to-face appointment.

What happens if I need an interpreter?

We can arrange for an interpreter to be on the phone call with your clinician. Please ask a family member or friend to phone the number on your appointment letter at least 3 days before your appointment and tell us what language is needed, if you have not already discussed this with us.

What happens after my telephone appointment?

We will send a letter to your GP after your appointment, and we will send a copy of this letter to you. If you DO NOT wish to have a copy of this letter, please contact the department.

It is important that you do not call or text the number that the clinician used to call you for your telephone appointment. The number will be for telephone clinic appointments only. You will not be able to contact your clinician on this number. Please call the hospital department if you have any queries.

How was your appointment?

Your experience of our outpatient services is very important to us. Your feedback helps us to know what is working well, and what we could do better.

Please let us know your feedback by completing our online survey which can be accessed at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/OutpatientFeedback/

or using this QR code



NHS Constitution

The NHS Constitution pledges that patients can expect to start their consultant-led treatment for non-urgent conditions within a maximum of 18 weeks from referral. This is unless the patient chooses to wait longer, or it is clinically appropriate that they do so. If you have any concerns regarding the length of time you are waiting, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01271 314090 or ndht.PALS@nhs.net, who will be happy to support you.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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This leaflet was designed by the Communications Department.
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