



December 2024

Dear Patient

We write to you with the aim of providing you with updates on our practice, as we are aware there have been a lot of changes over recent months and it is important to us that you feel fully informed about your healthcare and our practice. We have been working really hard to ensure we give you and your family the best possible care and would like to take you behind the scenes to explain this all in depth.

CQC

In the summer of 2023, we had a Care Quality Commission inspection – we all worked incredibly hard to provide the CQC with all the evidence they ask for ahead of the inspection date and are so proud of how our team all came together. Our inspection date was at the end of August and went really well – we received our report rating us as ‘Outstanding’ in December 2023. Included in the information that CQC look at, is patient feedback – so thank you to anyone who provided this.

Part of being a cohesive team, is recognising when we could do better – so this is how our change to you accessing GP appointments came about, as despite receiving our outstanding status we felt we could do better with regards to access for all patients.

Total Triage

Why did we change?

On 29th April 2024 we moved over to a new way of triaging your health needs and booking appointments with your GP, advanced nurse practitioner or acute illness nurse. We fully recognised that accessing our appointments was difficult for patients, something that our Patient Participation Group reinforced. It was a difficult winter for us too and none of us were happy with our system of telephone callbacks and the ‘appointment lottery’ that had come about after the Covid Pandemic.

Our telephone triage worked very well for us when we introduced it in 2014 for at least 8 or 9 years. In truth though, we recognise that it became illogical for patients, difficult for our admin teams and impossible for our clinical teams.

How does the appointment system work?

Every clinical question or problem is submitted via an online form to enable us to 'triage' your request. A GP will review the information provided and quickly reply with questions, advice or a booking link which will allow you to book an appointment with the clinician most qualified to deal with your problem. This might be with a GP, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physiotherapist (in our musculoskeletal service), a pharmacist or member of the medicine management team etc.

We would like to reassure you that this will dramatically improve your access and experience of appointment booking and allow our admin teams to help those with no internet or mobile phone access.

How have the changes helped?

Our new system works so well, because it relies on 1 or 2 doctors a day triaging your requests, rather than us all triaging and also consulting with patients. The majority of patients submit a query online – either via our website or via the NHS app, leaving our reception team able to handle telephone queries more ably and more rapidly. Our telephone waiting times have dramatically reduced in time.

Our team are also able to help patients who do not have a mobile phone or internet access – so our system is fairer for everyone.

All submissions are looked at on the same day, often in less than an hour. We offer same day appointments for anyone who is unwell or offer others with more "routine" queries the facility to prebook a face to face or telephone consultation.

Since we started using this system in late April 2024 we have dealt with 28,358 requests from patients, on top of the thousands of routine appointments offered for blood tests, wound care, health checks and other routine nursing appointments.

Since moving to our new computer records system we have offered 39064 appointments for 9512 of our patients.

How can you help us?

We are very happy to guide you through the process of submitting a query using our online form. We need to be doing this more quickly though to ensure we have the staffing levels to help those who are not online or without a mobile phone.

We can see from your medical records when you speak to our reception team, who has a mobile phone, who has registered for online access and who has not. We encounter a minority of patients who simply refuse to try to use our new system – this slows everyone down – and our reception team therefore submit a query for you. GPs then reply and we often engage in a helpful conversation via message exchange – proving how simple this system is.

So please, if you have a mobile phone or internet access, please try to make things easier for you and your community, and our team, by giving this a go – it really is very simple and user friendly.

Use of text messages to communicate results.

Our new appointment system means that our clinicians have longer appointment times to help you. Our standard appointment is now 15 minutes long, rather than 10 minutes. This helps patients and our team.

To make this happen, we have started to handle test results and hospital letters in a different way. Our clinical team have protected time – at least an hour each day and often more – to review results and communicate them to you. We will do this by messaging you, calling you or asking our team to pass on a message if you do not have a mobile phone.

This has gone down really well so far for patients; we really appreciate your understanding that this is a necessary part of improving our timing for you.

SystmOne

In May 2024 we changed our clinical system (your medical records) from EMIS to SystmOne. We had to do this to speed up the system and enable us to communicate with other community services. This was a really challenging time, especially as we had also just changed our appointment methodology.

During this switchover we were promised a lot of IT support but didn't actually receive as much as we had hoped – but we are now happy that our system is well understood and fully embedded in everyday use for us all.

NHS App

The changeover meant that many patients had to move from Patient Access to using the NHS App. Some also lost old data on their NHS App. We employed someone fulltime to help with your NHS App and hundreds of you came in for advice and to receive help setting up again.

There remains a minority of patients who still cannot see old data on their app. Sadly, despite lengthy discussions with NHS England and NHS IT teams, we are unable to establish why this is. We have been offered no solutions by the providers of our IT systems and have identified that there is nothing from our perspective that can be altered to help. We are very sorry that this has happened to some of you and will continue to make enquiries on your behalf.

We have attached some information on how to use the NHS app. We also host regular sessions aimed at teaching people how to use IT in general, please get in touch with our reception team if you would like to attend.

Further changes to help improve your care

Once we had settled into our new appointment and clinical system, we started to look at other ways of developing and being safe and efficient. We are really focused on making sure that we always strive to improve for you and our team, there are so many ways to work more efficiently and we constantly need to change to do this.

We have recently been able to dedicate a full month of Dr Coates stepping away from seeing patients and focusing on a few projects which we have detailed below. Thanks to our amazing team of GPs, nurses, physiotherapist and clinical pharmacists – you hopefully will not have felt the impact of this.

Medication Reviews

Our plan is to make these more effective by establishing a tiered system depending on the type of medication you take. Some people need to see our nurse for up to an hour and have extensive discussions about their long term condition, some people need a brief bit of information sending to them about their contraceptive pill, and many in between need an exchange of questions and answers to ensure their prescriptions are safe. Our aim is to proactively contact patients whose review is due (usually annually around your birth month) and – with lots of work in the background – ensure you receive the right help depending on your health needs. This may sound simple but with 8129 patients taking a repeat medication, this is no easy task.

Referrals

Our growing list size means that more patients need referrals and our new system means that we are now able to easily access the referral forms without always needing to nag our secretaries to help us hunt out the correct form – this will help our admin team enormously and free them up to help you more.

Recall Processes

We have enhanced our systems to help ensure we can contact patients proactively when repeat tests, referrals and injections are due. This could be something as simple as a repeat blood test in a few months' time, a referral for a scan at the hospital or many other items that need to happen for you in months or even years' time. We want to improve the way you are contacted and arrange these things so that you do not need to spend time on the phone calling us to enquire or book. We have already started using our new system and you will see the effect of this as and when you are contacted, reminding you when an upcoming item is due. It really helps us if we have up to date mobile phone details for you so that we can send out information and links for you to book appointments without having to call us up and wait to speak to the team.

Patient Feedback

Feedback is so important; it has been instrumental in enabling us to set up better systems for you. Annually patient survey results are published, and we have always been very proud to be in the top 3-5% of the country. This year, as a result of our problems with accessing appointments, our feedback rightly told us that we needed to change. [GP Patient Survey \(gp-patient.co.uk\)](http://gp-patient.co.uk) We really hope that we will be back on track by the time next year's surveys are sent around.

We are so proud that we consistently hear from you that our clinicians do a brilliant job when you see us. We have wonderful feedback from the Friends and Family Test (a NHS feedback scheme created to give quick feedback after consultations) and I Want Great Care – thank you for this.

Our plan, moving forward, is to survey how our new appointment system works for you and how we can adapt to help in any way. We will soon be sending out surveys to monitor this.

Information on General Practice

It has been an ‘interesting’ time for medics with a lot going on politically in the NHS. Our priority is, and always has been, to provide you with the best possible care. What we also need to do is stand by our colleagues and our fellow practices in our PCN as we all need support.

For decades now, general practice has been a particularly underfunded area of the NHS – we provide 90% of health care with 10% of the NHS budget. Lincolnshire especially is an area with low funding – our ICB (integrated care board) are the second lowest in England and Wales for investing additional funds into general practice.

This is why you will hear of practices locally participating in ‘collective action’ – with an aim of boosting fundings for general practice to enable us to provide you with a better service.

Frequently Asked Questions

Our Patient Participation Group have provided us with some helpful questions to answer, with an aim of ensuring you have as much information as possible from us.

Are you accepting new patients?

Yes! Our list is open to new patients.

If other household members are registered at a different practice can they switch to your practice?

We would encourage parents and children under 16 to be registered at the same practice yes.

What does it mean that you are a Veterans Friendly Practice? Does this include my family?

This accreditation was set up by the Royal College of General Practitioners a few years ago and we immediately signed up. The scheme helps our clinicians and admin teams to be more aware of veteran health needs. Our lead GP in this area (Dr Tollerfield, himself an Army Veteran) helps to boost our understanding in this area.

We ensure that there is a code added to your notes, this means that if you are referred to a specialist you can sometimes be seen more quickly because of your veteran status. It also means that we are aware that certain situations or dates can be triggering for veterans and we can proactively reach out to you during difficult times. We are aware of organisations who can offer mental health input for veterans so can introduce this idea to you if you are struggling.

Your family members are not included in this scheme but they do benefit from seeing you get the help you deserve.

Can I see the same GP or nurse for my condition?

Yes. We try to offer what we call “continuity of care” which means that the same clinician sees you for the same condition – it does make more sense. There are times when this isn’t possible, but you always have a choice of who you see. In the event of an emergency then the closest and most appropriate clinician will always help.

Can I sit in any waiting room? I have autism and don't like the crowded first waiting area so can I sit elsewhere?

Yes. We suggest that you sit in the waiting room closest to the consultation room you will be called into – but the screens work in any waiting area. The teal and red waiting rooms are often quieter.

How do I let someone know if I'm unhappy with my treatment?

Please try to raise this at the time with the clinician you are seeing if you feel comfortable to do so. We encourage positive and negative feedback - it is used to improve services. If you’re unhappy with an NHS service, it’s often worthwhile discussing your concerns early on with the provider of the service, as they may be able to sort the issue out quickly. Most problems can be dealt with at this stage, but in some cases you may feel more comfortable speaking to someone not directly involved in your care. . If you feel you would like another opinion please get in touch using our triage system or by calling reception.

If you wish to make a complaint please speak to any staff member who will guide you through our NHS process.

Did you know that patients are 10 times more likely to give us feedback about a negative event than a positive one? If you have had a good experience please consider giving us feedback too!

How do I get emergency contraception when you are closed?

Please visit your pharmacy or contact 111

Can I get counselling at the surgery?

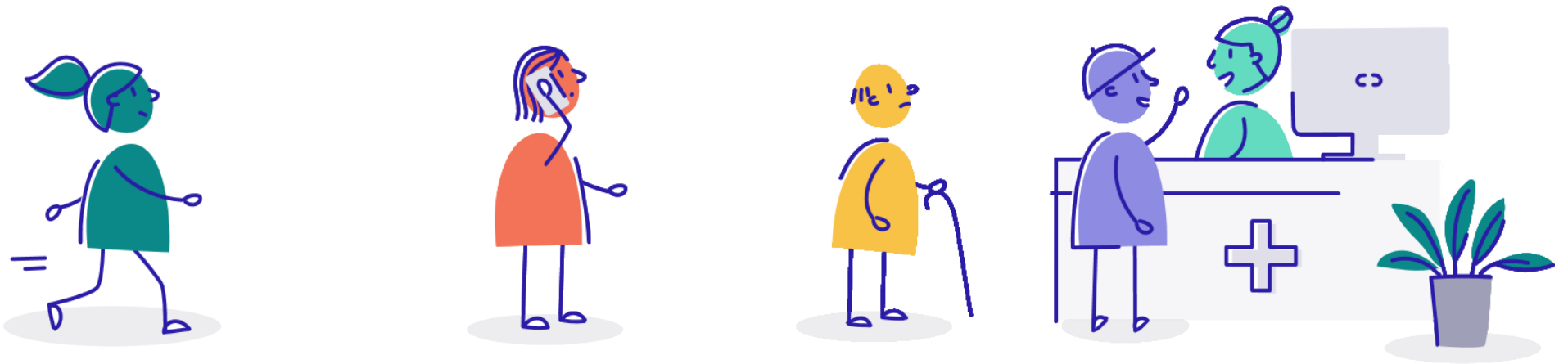
Yes, you can. We work closely with counselling students who can offer support. Your clinician will suggest this treatment for you if it is appropriate for your needs. Otherwise, you can self-refer for counselling by calling 0303 123 4000 or visit www.lincolnshiretalkingtherapies.nhs.uk/home

How can patients help us?

Have you considered joining our Patient Participation Group? We have attached some information from our PPG for your interest.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, we hope this information has been helpful for you.

Dr Paul Cregor, Mr Ian Robinson, Dr Rebecca Mitchell and Dr Richard Coates



You don't have to join the morning rush to reach your GP.

There are quick and easy ways to get in touch, and get the care you need.

- Choose the recommended routes below to **avoid queues**.
- However you contact us, a healthcare professional will assess your request **in the same way, as soon as possible**.
- Our aim is to give everyone **fair and equal access** to care.

Recommended

Use the NHS App

Contact us via the NHS App – it's **quick, safe** and sends your request straight to our team.



Recommended

Visit our website

Get in touch via our surgery's website. **It's fast, secure** and your request is delivered straight to our team.



Call or visit the surgery

If you cannot contact us online, you can still telephone or visit the surgery. We process all requests in the same way, so **no route is quicker than another**.



Powered by



Download the NHS App
to better manage your health



Getting in touch with your practice via the NHS App

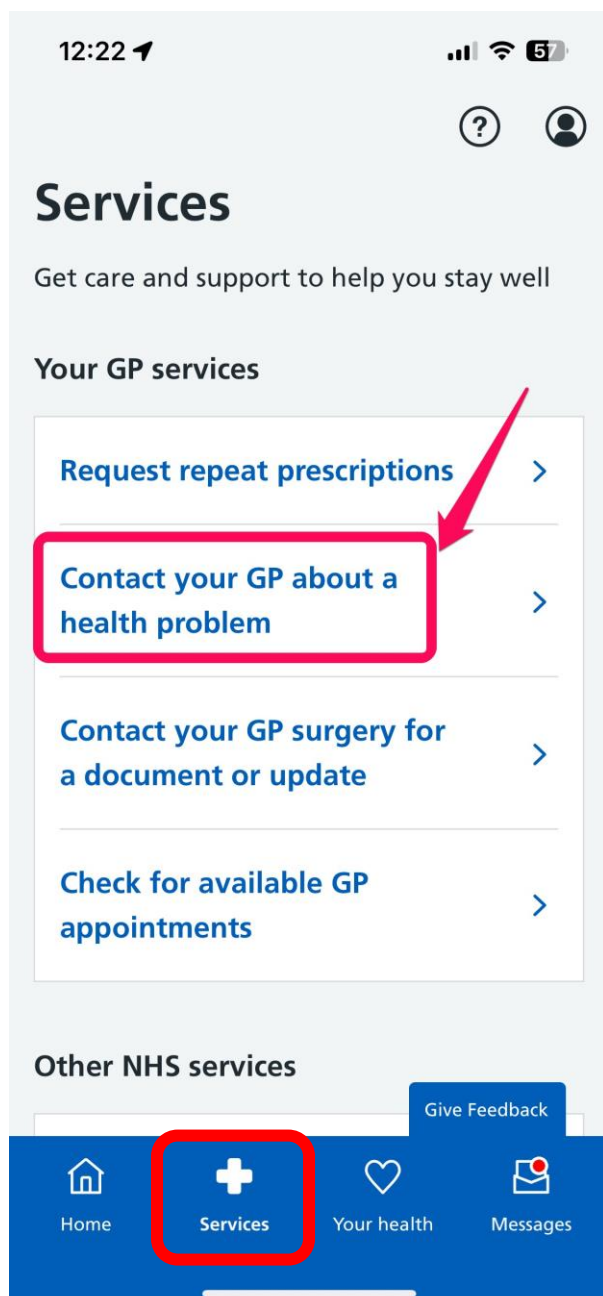
You can now get in touch with your practice to submit a medical query/admin request through the NHS App. 🖱️



To do this, you'll need to download the NHS App and sign in with your NHS login (or sign up if you don't have a login yet). [You can read more about that here.](#)

Submitting a medical query via the NHS App:

To submit a medical query, select the "Services" option at the bottom of the screen, then "**Contact your GP about a health problem**".



You will be asked to confirm whether you are experiencing any of the below symptoms.

16:35 4G

< Back

Contact your GP about a health problem

This service is provided by Accurx Limited

Your GP surgery has chosen this online consultation service provider.

Continue

[Find out more about online consultation services](#)

16:35 4G

< Back

This service is provided by your GP surgery

Medical Request

Confirm this is not an emergency

⚠ This will be read by a member of the team within 2 working days

In an emergency don't use this form as your request will **NOT** be seen immediately. If it's not an emergency but you need medical help right now, please call your GP. If your GP practice is closed visit [NHS 111 online](#) or call 111.

Adults Children

Call 999 or go to A&E now if you or someone has any of these:

- signs of a heart attack (chest pain, pressure, heaviness, tightness or squeezing across the chest)
- signs of a stroke (face drooping on one side)

16:35 4G

< Back

This service is provided by your GP surgery

unconscious & can't be woken up)

- **sudden, rapid swelling** (of the lips, mouth, throat or tongue)

British Sign Language (BSL) speakers can [make a BSL video call to 999](#)

Deaf, hard of hearing or speech-impaired people can use 18000 to contact 999 using text relay or a textphone.

⚠ In an emergency don't use this form as your request will NOT be seen immediately. If it's not an emergency but you need medical help right now, please call your GP. If your GP practice is closed visit [NHS 111 online](#) or call 111.

I confirm, none of these are present

Read our [security & privacy policy for patients](#) to find out about how Accurx facilitate your care securely

Home Services Your health Messages

After confirming this, you'll be able to answer questions to submit a request to get help regarding a medical issue. You will need to verify if the request is for yourself or someone else.

16:36 5G

< Back

This service is provided by your GP surgery

Medical Request

Medical problem

ⓘ Make it clear if you are filling this in on behalf of someone else.

Please describe the medical problem

For example, I have back pain

I have back pain

484 characters remaining

+ Attach a photo (optional)

How long has this been going on for? Is it getting better or worse?

For example, 2 weeks, it is getting worse

2 weeks and it's getting worse

470 characters remaining

16:36 5G

< Back

This service is provided by your GP surgery

Medical request

Your details

Provide details so we can identify who this request is for.

ⓘ Changing details on this page will not affect the details within your NHS account

First Name

Jim

Last Name

Hammond

Date of birth

For example 26 2 1956

Day Month Year

05 05 1974

Sex

16:36 5G

< Back

This service is provided by your GP surgery

Medical request

Who is this request for?

☒ Myself

☐ Someone else

Continue

Home Services Your health Messages

Once you choose your preferred method of contact, you will be asked to review the request before it is completed and submitted.
Once submitted, you'll be taken to a confirmation page:

16:365G

[?](#)[?](#)

[Back](#)

This service is provided by your GP surgery

Why aren't there more options?

Postcode

Phone number

A mobile number is preferred.

How would you like to be contacted? (Select all that apply)

While we do our best to follow your preferences, this may not always be possible

☒ Text message

☐ Phone call

Continue

16:375G

[?](#)[?](#)

[Back](#)

This service is provided by your GP surgery

Please describe the medical problem:

I have back pain

How long has this been going on for? Is it getting better or worse?:

2 weeks and it's getting worse

Have you tried anything to help?:

I have tried physio and pain killers

Is there anything you are particularly worried about?:

It's affecting my work

How would you like us to help?:

I would like a referral

Please tell us the best times to contact you:

In the morning

Contact method preference: Text message

Submit request

16:375G

[?](#)[?](#)

This service is provided by your GP surgery

Request submitted!

What happens next?

The practice will review your request within 2 working days

If you become more unwell or need help more urgently, please call your GP. If your GP practice is closed, visit [NHS 111 online](#) or call 111. In an emergency [call 999](#)

[Leave us feedback about your experience](#)

This feedback is for Accurx. They built this form and regularly review it to make improvements.

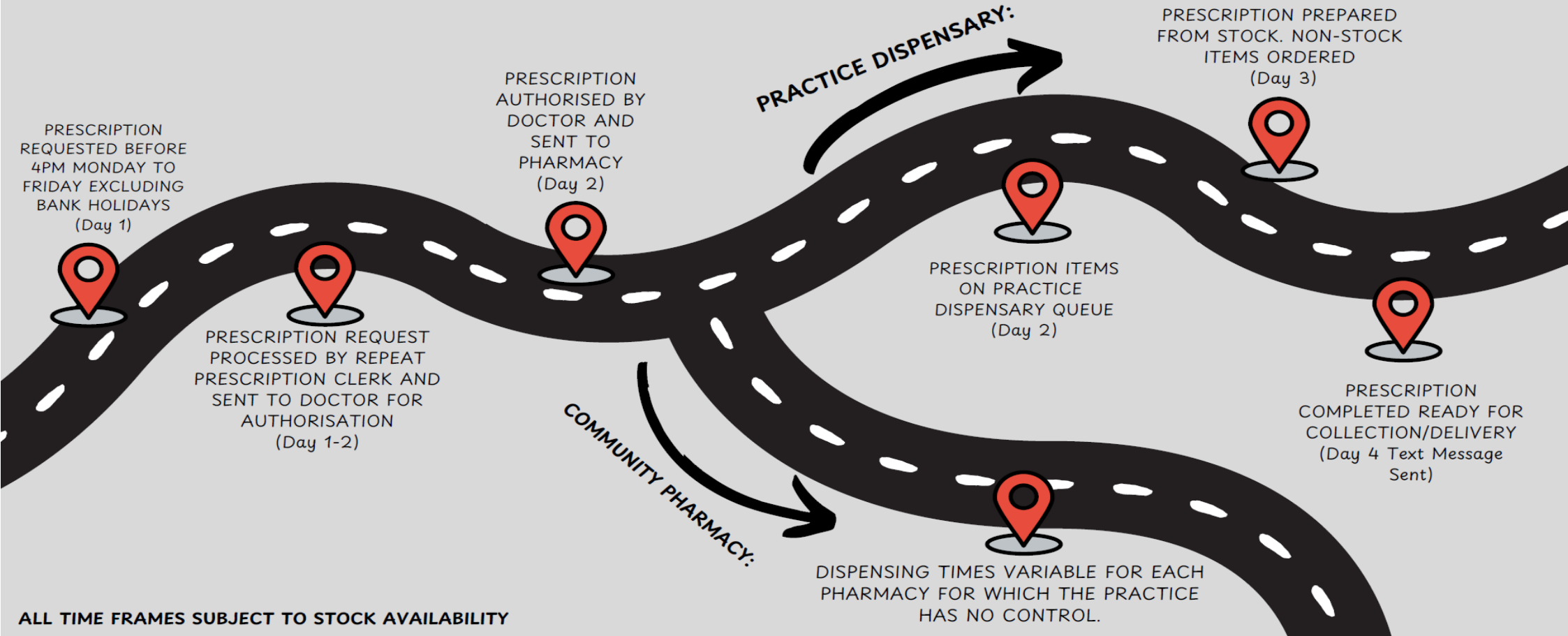
[Back to home](#)

HomeServicesYour healthMessages

HomeServicesYour healthMessages

HomeServicesYour healthMessages

REPEAT PRESCRIPTION PROCESS:



ALL TIME FRAMES SUBJECT TO STOCK AVAILABILITY

A word from our PPG

What is a PPG?

PPG stands for **Patient Participation Group**. It's a group of patients and carers registered with a specific GP practice who volunteer their time to work with the practice to improve and enhance the services provided to all patients. They meet regularly to discuss how to improve the services you receive at your GP surgery. It's a chance for you to share your views, and play an active part in your healthcare.

PPGs work with GPs and staff to:

- **Improve services:** Identify areas for improvement and implement changes that benefit patients. PPG's look at the services the practice offers, the patient experience and how improvements can be made.
- **Better communication:** Help to ensure clear and open communication between you and the practice.
- **Promote health:** Encourage healthy lifestyles and prevent illness, Promote health information via noticeboards, newsletter and social media. Organise local health and wellbeing events.

The Galletly PPG

Galletly PPG are volunteers from a variety of backgrounds who work with the practice to support and promote the best possible healthcare for all patients.

At Galletly, our PPG is working to reach out to the community and understand more about local needs. We also collaborate with other PPGs in Lincolnshire to influence healthcare decisions by feeding back ideas and suggestions on how to shape services and influence the help that is available.

Want to join?

If you're interested in joining us please email: galletlyppg@gmail.com or write to us via the Galletly Practice.