

# What happens when you are referred by your GP to see a specialist?

This leaflet describes what you can expect to happen when your GP refers you to see a specialist or consultant



## Introducing e-referral.

The NHS e-Referral Service (e-RS) combines electronic booking with a choice of place, date and time for first hospital or clinic appointments. Patients can choose their initial hospital or clinic appointment, book it in the GP surgery at the point of referral, or later at home on the phone or online

## Why have I been referred?

Should you need to be referred a referral will be made for you via e-referrals to a secondary care (hospital service). Your GP will discuss with you and, if appropriate, your carer, about why a referral is being recommended. It is usually because your GP wants a specialist's help in deciding on the best way to treat your condition. This might involve referring you for tests or investigations that cannot be carried out in a GP surgery. Your GP will also discuss with you what choices there are for where you can be referred.

## How will I hear about where and when the appointment is-NHS referrals?

GP practices and hospitals use different ways of arranging appointments:

### Information from the GP

- Your GP practice may give you a reference number and a password you can use to book, change or cancel your appointment online or by phone. In time, more and more GP practices will refer patients in this way.
- If you have provided us with an email address, we will email you the details of your appointment to you. If you have not provided us with an email address or do not wish us to send an email. Please call in to the surgery 5 days after you have seen the GP to collect the paper copy of your appointment
- On the appointment letter received there will instructions as to how to change your appointment should you wish/need to. It will also state who the provider of the appointment is if you wish to query your appointment.

### Information from the Hospital

- You may receive a letter from the hospital confirming your appointment. You need to reply as soon as possible and tell the hospital if you can attend on the date offered.
- Alternatively, sometimes patients receive a letter asking them to phone the hospital to make an appointment with a specialist

## Changing or cancelling your appointment

If you need to change your appointment details of how this can be done will be on your appointment letter. If you are unable to make to make the date given to you, please **ALWAYS** remember to cancel your appointment. Not attending costs the NHS approximately £160\* and they will discharge you without an appointment.

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If you have been referred via e-Referral you can change or manage your appointment online using the Patient Web Application – you will need your Unique Booking Reference Number (UBRN) and your password which are available on your appointment letter.

You can use this service if you would like to query your appointment date or time or if you would like to make amendments to your appointment.

There are three options available on how to do this:

1. Log on to the patient web application for e-RS and manage your appointment  
<https://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/appointment-booking/Pages/about-the-referral-system.aspx>
2. Contact the National Appointments Telephone Line on 0345 608 8888 (Monday-Friday, 8am-8pm, weekends and bank holidays 8am-4pm. Closed Christmas Day. Call charges from landlines and mobile networks may vary).
3. Contact the provider directly (numbers available on individual trust websites)

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## Hospital Contact Numbers- Appointments

If you have not received an appointment confirmation within 3 weeks of being referred by your GP, then please contact the hospital that you were referred to:

Please see local hospital numbers:

|                                 |                               |                                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Patient Contact Numbers:</b> | <b>Kingston</b>               | <b>0208 546 7711 then dept. Ext</b> |
|                                 | <b>St Georges/Queen Marys</b> | <b>020 8725 0007.</b>               |
|                                 | <b>West Middlesex</b>         | <b>020 8321 5610</b>                |
|                                 | <b>Chelsea Westminster</b>    | <b>020 3315 6666</b>                |

**Please note if you must change your appointment within 24 hours only the provider can do this.**

**What do I do if I have any questions?**

If you have any specific questions related to your hospital care, your specialist will be able to help you with this, so it is important that you make sure you know how you can contact your specialist's office. If you have any general questions related to your health, your GP surgery will be able to help you.

**What do I do if I want to make a complaint?**

If you would like to make a complaint about your appointment in terms of wait times, then please contact the PALS department at the provider you were referred to.

If your complaint is about the way the referral was processed by your GP then please contact the practice directly.