

e-Referral Service (e-RS)

Frequently Asked Questions for GP surgeries

Service/Area	Question	Answer
Referrals	How do I make an urgent referral?	Where an urgent appointment is required but no urgent appointments are available to book, please book the next available routine appointment and clearly mark on the attached referral that the request is urgent. When clinicians triage the referral, they will assess the referral and bring appointments forward where appropriate.
Referrals	Which services are excluded from being referred Via e-RS?	There are a number of excluded specialties which can be found at http://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk/files/2018/08/Electronic-Referrals-Service-excluded-specialities-V2.pdf . These have been agreed with the CCG.
System & Process	What if there's an IT problem?	<p>If there is an IT problem causing e-RS to be unavailable, there is a process in place whereby paper referrals can be sent. This is as follows:</p> <p>Seek confirmation from your CCG that the paper system should be used instead of e-RS, then this system for referrals as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2ww & urgent referrals – should e-RS be unavailable for more than 24 hours • Routine referrals – should e-RS be unavailable for more than 48 hours
System & Process	What if a GP wants to make a referral after home visits?	<p>For referrals done after home visits GPs should either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • send a referral via e-RS once they are back at the practice, or; • task a member of the practice team to send an e-RS referral on your behalf.

Advice & Guidance	We write letters and e-mails asking for advice from consultants, does this change?	For advice and guidance – GPs can use e-RS in the same way as they would for a referral. Select the service you require and simply type in your query with a brief history, once reviewed by a consultant you will receive a response from them. Should a referral then be required, this would need to be done in the usual way using e-RS.
Booking an appointment	What happens if there are no appointments available?	If there is no capacity showing on the e-RS, please use the 'Defer to Provider' option. The Trust is reviewing lists daily, so your referral will be dealt with quickly and appropriately.
Finding the correct service	What happens when I cannot find the right service?	If you are struggling to find a specific service, please contact your E-RS lead at the CCG who will be able to help in the first instance any service queries which need further investigation will be escalated to the Trust direct.
Giving patients choice	Why do I need to offer more than one service?	Please make sure you select as many choices of service as possible for your patients - this gives them the best chance of being seen as soon as possible. E.g. Orthopaedic Hip service at Lister, QE11 and HCH.
Sending referrals to a named clinician	Can I send all my patients to a named clinician	Whilst you as a GP probably know certain Consultants and would like patients treated by them, most of our services offer a pooled referral system. When a named clinician referral is made this gives less flexibility to book the patient an appropriate appointment in a reasonable timescale. Please only use this function for continuity of care of the patient. Any specific service requirements you may need to refer to is available within the DOS.

Some FAQs for your patients

Question	Answer
What is e-RS?	<p>e-RS is the national electronic Referrals System, that your GP uses to book outpatient appointments at hospitals and clinics.</p> <p>e-RS puts the patient at the heart of the GP referral because it enables patients to book choose their appointment at a hospital or clinic, at a date and time that is convenient to them.</p> <p>Additionally, by booking their appointment electronically patients can discuss options with their relatives before booking the appointment – which can be done at home on the phone or online.</p>

<p>I don't have a computer – how can I book my appointment?</p>	<p>Patients will still be able to book, check, change or cancel their appointment by telephone – using the phone number on your UBRN confirmation letter.</p>
<p>How do I change an existing appointment?</p>	<p>Using your UBRN (Unique Booking Reference Number) and password you can go on www.NHS.UK and change, or cancel, your appointment. You can also use the National telephone line.</p>
<p>How will I hear about where and when the appointment is?</p>	<p>GP practices use different ways of arranging appointments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your GP practice will give you a reference number and a password you can use to book, change or cancel your appointment online or by phone. practices will refer patients in this way. • You will receive a letter from the hospital confirming your appointment. You need to contact them as soon as possible and tell the hospital if you can attend on the date offered.
<p>My GP used to phone the local hospital if my appointment was urgent – will this still happen?</p>	<p>Your GP surgery will sometimes telephone a hospital to seek urgent advice before booking your appointment using the e-Referral Service (e-RS).</p>
<p>What if I have any other questions or need help?</p>	<p>Ask your GP surgery or visit www.nhs.uk.</p>