

Online consultation FAQs

Consulting online is a quick and convenient alternative to visiting your GP practice.

Many patients at Chillington Health Centre are already taking advantage of the benefits, by accessing GP services through their devices.

However, we appreciate that some of you might be daunted by new technology or reluctant to change the way you use GP services.

So, to help those patients understand how to use online consultations and how it can make life easier, we've put together this list of frequently asked questions.

What are online consultations?

Online consultations allow you to access GP services through your phone, tablet or computer.

They allow you to ask for advice about conditions that you would, previously, have asked to see the GP about. But you can also use online consultations to look up information about a health issues, ask for sick notes, and discuss tests.

I've heard people talking about eConsult. Is that something different?

No. eConsult is simply the name of the online consultation system we use at Chillington.

How do I use online consultations?

Go to the surgery's website (<https://www.chillingtonsurgery.co.uk>) and click on the 'Get an eConsult response within 24 hours' button on the right-hand-side of the homepage.

Then, simply follow the instructions and answer the questions. You don't need to log in, so there are no passwords to remember.

Depending on your responses you may be asked to add some information about your condition and symptoms. These are the same questions your GP would ask in a normal appointment.

When filling out the form, it's important to include as much information as possible about your condition.

Online consultations also includes a wealth of information on how to treat yourself. So, you may be able to resolve your issue there and then.

You can also use it to ask for sick notes and test results.

When you're done, just submit the form.

What happens after I've submitted the form?

If you asked for treatment, advice or other information, we'll review your information and decide the best course of action. We'll then get in touch by the end next working day to let you know the next step.

For example:

- If you need to speak to a GP, we'll get in touch to arrange a face-to-face appointment or a video or phone consultation.
- If you have a minor ailment, we'll give you treatment advice and, if appropriate, a prescription.
- If you need another service (a physiotherapist, for example) you'll be referred.
- If you asked for a sick note or letter, or to discuss a test, your practice will review your request and get in touch.

When can I use online consultations?

It's available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including Bank Holiday. However, you may not get a response until the end of the next working day.

What if I want consult online but don't have a device or internet access?

If you don't have a device or internet access, simply phone the surgery and ask a member of the team to fill out the form on your behalf. Or, you can visit the surgery and use the tablet device and free Wi-Fi that's we provide.

Can I submit an online consultation for someone else?

Generally, patients should submit online consultations based on their own symptoms or conditions.

However, if you're the parent or guardian of someone aged under 18, you can fill out the form for them. Likewise, if a friend or family member needs help filling out the form, you can do so, provided you have their consent.

Why is Chillington using online consultations and how will I benefit?

Firstly, you save time. You don't have to queue on the phone to make a face-to-face appointment and, because you get a response by the end of the next working day, you'll quickly find out what care you need.

Many medical enquiries can also be resolved without a face-to-face appointment. So, by using online consultations, you'll avoid these unnecessary disruptions to your day. That's good news if you struggle to get time off work, care for others and can't leave them alone, or are housebound.

You can use it wherever you are – whether it's your lunch break at work, on the train or in the comfort of your own home. And, if you have a health concern while you're away, you can consult online rather than waiting until you come home.

Online consultations help if you find it difficult talking about your symptoms face-to-face. This means you're in control and don't have to tell anyone else where you're going.

Are may other practices using online consultations?

Yes. Over 1,000 practices across the UK already use equivalent systems, and more than a million patients have submitted online consultation forms.

In fact, Devon is one of the areas with the highest uptake in the country.

Should I consult online instead of using the NHS 111 service?

No. Online consultations do not replace the NHS 111 service, which you should use if you need medical help or advice fast. This would include symptoms that are serious but not life-threatening. In these instances, dial 111 or go online to <https://111.nhs.uk/>.

Likewise, if your condition is life-threatening, you should dial 999. This would include a heart attack or stroke, severe breathing difficulties, heavy bleeding or severe injuries.