

## Patient Information

### Why am I waiting so long to see a GP?

- 1) **High demand** – patient demand has increased substantially. An analysis, published in the medical journal The Lancet, showed there were significant increases in both the numbers of consultations being requested by patients and the lengths of the consultations; the system, the researchers suggested, was reaching a “saturation point”.
- 2) **Complex Cases** – 10% rise in the number of people with 2 or more long term conditions over the last 10 years, so called ‘multi-morbidity’ Patients who live longer, but with more health problems, also face the potential problem of polypharmacy, the use of multiple medications. Avoiding the harms that medicines can cause, while keeping their potential benefits by optimising their use, is a challenge faced by every GP every day, and one that can rarely be managed during a typical 10-minute consultation.
- 3) **National Shortage of GPs** - With rising demands and clinical complexity, the number of UK GPs continues to fall, a trend that, unless adequately addressed, appears likely to continue. Dr Richard Van Mellaerts, deputy chair of the British Medical Association’s (BMA) England GP committee describes what healthcare staff call ‘moral injury’ – the pain that comes from being unable to provide care to a standard they’d like. ‘There are too few GPs in England,’ he said. ‘And those that are there are exhausted. They’re working harder and harder, but it’s an impossible task at the moment. So, we need a system-wide solution from the NHS in order to fix this.’
- 4) **Longer waiting times in Hospitals** - In September, Downing Street said 400,000 people were waiting more than a year for operations, compared to just 1,600 before Covid-19. There are much longer waits for hospital outpatient appointments as well. The knock-on effect of this vast backlog sees patients return to their GPs to manage their conditions while they wait.
- 5) **Decrease in funding for General Practice** - The proportion of the NHS budget that goes to general practice had fallen to its lowest level since 2015-16 at just 8.4%, even though GPs and their teams provide almost 90% of patient care. The situation has become more critical. Even if we had more GPs, the service charges for running a GP surgery have gone up to cover utilities increase and National Minimum Wage increase of over 10%. The Government is only increasing funding for General Practice by 2%, which cannot cover the increase in costs. We can’t do more with less.

# General Practice



## What can you do as a Patient to help?

**Please be patient with us** – we want to help all our patients as best we can with the limited funding and resources we have to meet the demand. We have to do this by clinically assessing priority and that may mean some patients have to wait for a GP appointment, but we will have determined it is safe for you to wait.

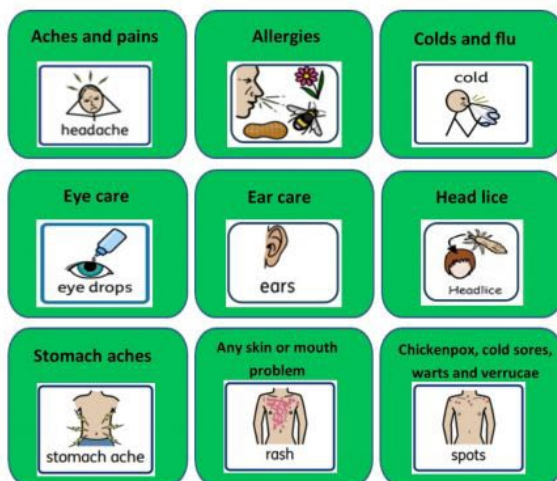
**What have you tried before contacting us?** - Have you tried any self-care advice from the NHS website which you can access via the NHS App or [The NHS website - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk) or the HANDi App provides great advice on childhood conditions? Or have you been to a Pharmacy to ask their advice or for over-the-counter medication to help.



### Free advice and treatment

Did you know your local pharmacy can help with minor illness? Just walk in and ask for advice.

Visit your pharmacy if you're suffering from:



### Free advice and treatment

If you don't pay for your prescriptions you can get a wide range of medication free from your local community pharmacy.

Pharmacists are experts in the use of medicine and they can help you manage your minor illness.



**Let us direct you to the professional that's right for your symptoms** – We now have a range of staff working with us who are all highly skilled. This may be an Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Practitioner or Associate, Health Care Assistant, Paramedic, Pharmacist, Pharmacy Technician, Social Prescriber, Dietitian, Health and Wellbeing Coach or to external services. Please trust that they will be able to help you, and often in a way that is better than a GP due to their specific areas of expertise.

**Join your local GP Practice's Patient Group** – you can get more involved in how General Practice works and find ways to help your Practice.

**Influence Change** – if you think that the funding is insufficient for General Practice then let your local MP know. More patient voices expressing their concern over how little funding we get and the impact it has on them might help influence change.

# Did you know...



The Government gives this practice just £107.57 a year for each patient, whatever their health needs. That's less than the cost of a TV licence.

This means we're only given 30p a day for every patient registered with us – less than the cost of an apple.



**GPs want the same things that you do.**

We believe nobody should struggle to see their family doctor.

We believe general practice deserves a **bigger slice** of NHS funding so we can train and hire more GPs, deliver the services you require and make it easier to get appointments to see your GP and practice team.

**We know you deserve better than this. GPs Are On Your Side.**

[bma.org.uk/GPsOnYourSide](https://bma.org.uk/GPsOnYourSide)