

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



Please find below some frequently asked questions. If you have any further questions or would like to use any of the services, please contact Medical Solutions on **0333 015 0304**. Lines are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Calls from UK landlines and mobiles cost no more than a call to an 01 or 02 number and will count towards any inclusive minutes.

Who will I speak to when I call?

Callers will first speak to a specially trained operator who takes some details and arranges for a GP to call back at a convenient time. If calling for a webcam (video) consultation the operator will ask for an email address.

Is there a limit to the number of calls?

No. Patients can contact the GP advice line as often as needed, there is no limit to phone or webcam consultations.

Can I choose to speak to a male or female doctor?

Yes, where possible, we will always try to accommodate a patient's preference to speak to a male or female doctor. All our GPs are friendly, experienced, NHS practising GPs, with the same qualifications as your own NHS GP.

What sort of things can I ask about?

Anything you would normally ask your own GP, for example, about any travel vaccinations, sensitive or confidential concerns, explanations of diagnosis or treatment, aches and pains or any other health-related query you might have.

Will I still need to see a GP?

Most patients receive the advice, reassurance and, where appropriate, diagnosis they need from our doctors. Our doctors can assist with most health concerns, but if a patient's symptoms require a physical examination, or need a repeat prescription, they may be referred to their own GP.

Does this affect my benefit to see a Private GP in person? (Optimum Out-patient policyholders only)

If you are an Optimum Out-patient Plan policyholder, your access to seeing a private GP in person remains unaffected. Please see your Terms and Conditions document for more details.

Can the GPs issue a prescription?

Yes, GPs can arrange and electronically authorise private prescription medication. The online pharmacy will then contact the patient to arrange delivery of the medication to a nominated UK address. The pharmacy will take payment via credit or debit card.

Private prescription medication is subject to a full consultation with the GP taking into consideration presented symptoms, medical history and any current medication. Medication will only be issued where the GP believes it is clinically appropriate, on a case by case basis. Where appropriate, and as advised by the GP, prescriptions can be collected at a local pharmacy nominated by the patient.

What are the prescription medication delivery charges?

Provided medication is in stock and raised before 3pm, the medication is delivered the next working day to the patient's home or place of work. Many common items, such as antibiotics, Ventolin etc. are charged at the minimum price of £6.50. P&P costs vary but we would recommend tracked P&P delivered next working day before 1pm at a cost of £8.50. There is no P&P for collection of prescription medication at local pharmacies and medication charges will vary between pharmacies.

Can the GPs issue repeat prescriptions?

In line with clinical best practice guidelines for remote prescribing, our GPs are unable issue long term, repeat medication. Should a patient require repeat prescription medication, it is in their best interests to be seen by their regular GP who can provide the ongoing monitoring, medical record and follow up care such prescriptions require. GPs can offer advice on medication you are taking and may be able to offer short course medication depending on the symptoms presented.

Can I have my medication delivered abroad?

If inside the European Union and the GP believes the patient would benefit from medication, they may advise on 'over the counter' medications as a first consideration. If prescription medication is recommended, they may ask when the patient is due to return to the UK and if feasible deliver the medication upon their return home. If prescription medication is deemed necessary and appropriate based on the duration of the overseas stay and lead time required to get prescription medication delivered safely, the GP will prescribe the medication and it will be delivered to a nominated overseas address. Please note the cost of overseas postage will be higher than UK delivery, circa £30, therefore seeing a local GP may be the preferred option. Due to pharmaceutical laws and regulations we are unable to prescribe outside the EU.

How is the medication packaged?

It depends on the size and type of medication, but most smaller items are sent in cushioned, securely sealed packets. Packets or boxes are plain with no markings.

Are there any limits as to what the doctor can prescribe?

The service follows GMC best practice guidelines for remote prescribing. Should the GP feel it necessary, they can raise short-term medication for acute conditions. If a patient requires on-going medication or is seeking a repeat prescription, it is in their best interests to see their own GP to be examined.

Can the GPs issue fit notes?

Yes, should the GP feel it was required they can issue private fit notes. Patients should check that their employer that will accept a private fit note. Private fit notes are not acceptable for statutory sick pay.

Can the GPs issue referrals to specialists?

Should the GP feel that a patient would benefit from a specialist assessment or further treatment they can provide an open private referral letter. This referral is for Private Medical Care only and will not be accepted for services in the NHS. Referral letters can be posted or emailed directly according to patient preference. Please note the private referral is not a claims authorisation. Patients will need to contact their Private Medical Insurance provider prior to receiving any treatment, unless self-funding.

How will the GP service communicate with my own GP in the case of a private prescription being issued?

Where the doctor feels it is appropriate (especially where a prescription is issued), he/she will ask for the patient's permission to send a copy of the consultation notes to their NHS GP. Communication is by secure email, fax or post depending on the surgery.

How do you recruit your GPs? What qualifications do the doctors have?

Our GPs are carefully selected following a recommendation and approved by our Chief Medical Officer and senior Medical Advisors. All GPs have Bachelor of Medicine degrees and are Members of the Royal College of GPs; many have additional qualifications in areas of special interest. They are experienced, practising NHS GPs who are GMC Registered/Licensed, on the NHS England Performers list and GP Register.

How do you ensure the GPs are vetted on an ongoing basis?

As all of our GPs are NHS practising GPs, they all have a responsible officer they report to and have an annual 360-degree assessment to ensure they are fit to practise. In addition to this, we clinically audit them, hold bi-annual performance reviews with their peers and have extensive protocols and regular system training.

Our GPs are registered by the General Medical Council, Irish Medical Council and Information Commissioner's office and they are on the NHS Performers List.

All of our doctors are internally audited and most of them are also audited by Clinical Guardian.

What happens if I don't have internet, can I still have a private prescription over the phone?

Yes, our service doesn't require an internet connection to access the GP. Our telephone consultation service provides 24/7 telephone access to a GP, and should the doctor feel it was necessary, they can issue private prescription medication and open referrals, remotely.

Isn't it dangerous for doctors with no records to give prescriptions?

All Medical Solutions' GPs are experienced practising GPs who have received training on the electronic prescription system; they will use their judgement following a telephone or video consultation, which takes account of medical history, allergies, current medication and presented symptoms. As in their NHS role, they will adhere to the GMC guidelines on prescribing following a remote consultation.

The patient management system has dropdown menus identifying approved drugs and dosage levels for non-controlled medication to be prescribed and authorised by a digital signature from the GMC registered doctor. The GP raises the prescription then must make a second check prior to authorisation; it is then checked by a qualified pharmacist during and prior to the despatch process for necessary safeguards – safer and more efficient than paper-based prescribing. The service follows GMC best practice guidelines for remote prescribing.

The GPs take a full history from the patient including any current medication and dosages, allergies, etc. This detail remains on the patient management system, including data relating to any medication prescribed by the Medical Solutions doctor, so in future consultations, doctors can see previous prescribing history. When a prescription is issued, the consultation notes are sent to the patient's own GP with patient consent.

What happens if the doctor misses something?

All our GPs are NHS practising GPs working in primary care. In over 80% of cases our doctors are able to provide a clear course of action where the patient doesn't need to see another medical professional. If the doctor doesn't feel able to conclude on the best course of treatment over the phone, they will refer the patient to their own GP for a physical examination or further testing, or if necessary, to the emergency services if they believe high priority treatment might be necessary.

The GP telephone consultation service is available for unlimited use; if a patient's symptoms are not improving, or they later remember something which may be relevant, they can contact the service and speak to a doctor 24/7 to discuss any concerns.

How are data and records stored and can my own doctor access it?

All patient data and records are stored on our secure patient management system, in a secure data centre which is only accessible with dual-factor authentication by authorised personnel. We believe it is important to have all your medical records in one place, therefore, when appropriate and with permission, we send any relevant consultation notes, including notes for any prescriptions or referrals issued, to the patient's own NHS GP.

What about confidentiality?

Patient confidentiality is very important, any records remain confidential unless patients provide permission to share it with a third party such as their own NHS GP or a specialist.

How long will my personal data be held on your systems?

At least 10 years and in the case of someone under the age of 18, it is held for 10 years after they reach this age. Our IT systems have been accredited by Cyber Essentials.

Can I have a consultation and prescription for my children too?

Dependents are eligible to use the GP advice line, but where a member, or dependent, requiring GP services is under the age of 18, it is advisable for their legal guardian to call on their behalf.

Do Medical Solutions meet CQC standards?

Yes, Medical Solutions is regulated by the Care Quality Commission for the delivery of medical services and we are rated GOOD.



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