

If your GP refers you to a specialist, you usually have the right to choose which hospital you go to.

You can choose a hospital in your area – or one further away if you wish. You may also choose an independent hospital, if it provides services for the NHS.

You have the right to choose your hospital, but if you prefer, you can ask your GP to help you decide.

The benefits of choice

Choosing where to go for your care helps you make health and care decisions based on things important to you. These might include:

- **Waiting times** – you might choose a hospital outside your area if they can see you sooner.
- **Convenience** – you might choose a hospital near where you live or work, if it makes it easier to attend appointments.
- **Near family or friends** – you might choose a hospital close to family and friends, so they can support you during your treatment and recovery.
- **Recommendations** – you might choose a hospital based on quality ratings, reviews, personal experience or recommendations.

How Patient Choice works

Step 1:

You have a health concern and visit your GP, who advises you see a specialist. Your GP looks up services suitable for you and your condition.

Step 2:

Your GP practice will help you make a shortlist of suitable providers, based on your condition and what is important to you. You can be referred straight away by your GP practice, if you already know where you want to go. If you want more time to decide, your GP practice will give you a letter, or send you an email or text including a link to a website, where you can choose and confirm later.

Step 3:

- If you have a link from your GP practice, you can make your choice online
- or you can choose using the NHS App
- or you can phone the **National Referral Helpline on 0345 608 8888**.

Step 4:

If an appointment with your chosen hospital is not available online, your chosen hospital will contact you directly with an appointment date and time when one becomes available.

When choosing your hospital, it is important to remember you may need to attend several appointments.

Where to go for more information

To learn more about Patient Choice, use the QR code or visit: www.nhs.uk/patientchoice



You can compare hospitals across England by waiting times and Care Quality Commission ratings at www.myplannedcare.nhs.uk The website includes information about NHS providers and independent sector health organisations which provide NHS services.

If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the **National Referral Helpline** for help with choosing and confirming your hospital on **0345 608 8888**.

Patient
Choice

Choosing
your
hospital