Care Navigation

Frequently asked questions (for patients)

What is Care Navigation?

There is a lot happening right now across Bradford District and Craven to make sure that people have quick and convenient access to a GP when they need to speak to one, whether that's in person or over the phone.

Sometimes, though, your GP may not be the best person to see. Some patients could be seen and treated more quickly by a nurse or a physiotherapist – and in some cases, your GP practice might not be the right place at all for your query.

Many services now no longer need a GP to refer you, so we've been working closely with them to identify ways of ensuring you can get the right care as quickly as possible without having to wait for a GP appointment. That's where **Care Navigation** comes in.

Our practice reception teams have had specialist training on the services available to patients and on which one can help you best. This might be a GP appointment, but it could also be an appointment with a practice nurse, a pharmacist or a community service.

By letting our reception team know a little more about why you're calling to book an appointment, they can make sure you get access to the right care, from the right person, first time.

The team will never offer clinical advice and it is completely your choice if you would like to share details with them when you call. Anything you do share will be kept strictly confidential, but it could mean you get the treatment you need more quickly, from the right person.

Care Navigation is being rolled out in practices nationwide by NHS England. It is supported by the GPs in your practice, as well as NHS Bradford District and Craven CCG.

Why do Care Navigation?

Demand is increasing on the NHS as the population grows and many people are living longer. The NHS is treating a growing number of people with complex and often long-term health conditions which is creating a higher demand for GP appointments.

Our practices are changing to meet these needs and now offer appointments with a range of other healthcare professionals as well as GPs. These could include seeing a practice nurse, an advanced health practitioner, a pharmacist or a physiotherapist.

But change is not just happening in GP practices. Many NHS services that used to require a referral from a GP now no longer need one. We have worked closely with these services to find the quickest way of getting you to the service you need, without having to wait for a GP appointment.

We could also put you in touch with local community organisations that could help without the need to see a GP.

Many practices across Bradford District and Craven already ask for a little more information on why you are calling for an appointment, but this is done differently in each practice. Developing **Care Navigation** has allowed us to work together so that we can ensure all patients will receive the same experience when they call to book, so that everyone can access the right service for them in their local area, first time.

Research from NHS England has shown that around 16% of GP appointments were for help that could have been better provided by another healthcare professional. Booking a GP appointment when you could have been helped by a nurse, for example, takes GP time that could have been used for someone who couldn't be helped by a nurse. This increases waiting time for everyone and often results in return appointments to see the right person.

Care Navigation should prevent this happening and ultimately reduce waiting times for everyone, whilst making sure you get access to safe, high quality care from the right person, first time.

Will Care Navigation stop patients seeing a GP?

No, not at all. **Care Navigation** does not deny patients access to GP appointments.

Care Navigation is about choice. If you explain your reason for requesting a GP appointment to the reception team you may, if your symptoms are relevant, be offered the choice to see another healthcare professional. This can help you to be seen more quickly and can often mean you will only have to attend for one visit instead of two.

If you choose to decline this choice, an appointment will be offered in the normal way.

You will never be refused a GP appointment but we hope next time you contact your GP practice and speak with the reception team you will see the value of seeing another healthcare professional if they are able to help.

What if I don't want to share details with the reception team?

Taking part in **Care Navigation** is optional and you do not have to share details with the reception team in order to book an appointment at your GP practice.

If you do not wish to give a reason why you wish to see a GP, please let our reception team know and an appointment will be given in the normal way.

You will never be refused a GP appointment but we hope next time you contact your GP and speak with the reception team you will see the value of seeing another healthcare professional if they are able to help.

Will reception staff provide clinical advice or make clinical decisions to decide if patients are suitable for a GP appointment?

Care Navigation is not clinical and reception teams will not provide clinical advice or make clinical decisions.

When you call to book an appointment, the reception team will ask a few brief questions about why you are calling to see which service is best for you.

These questions have been developed with GPs and will help the reception team to share details of the best service for you. This might be booking you an appointment with a nurse or GP, or it could be providing you with contact details if it's a service you don't need a GP to refer you to, saving you time in having to wait for an appointment.

The choice is always yours though. It is completely up to you if you want to share information with the reception team. Any information you share with the reception team will be kept strictly confidential and you will never be refused a GP appointment.

Care Navigation encourages a patient to speak to someone other than their GP about their health needs by talking to the reception team. How is their patient confidentiality protected?

All NHS staff are duty bound to protect a patient's confidentiality (and a breach of this is a disciplinary offence). Each conversation will be kept strictly confidential.

If you do not wish to give a reason why you wish to see a GP please let our reception team know and an appointment will be given in the normal way.

Have reception staff received training to be able to help me?

Yes. Each member of reception staff has been trained as a care navigator and has completed an accredited online training course and a face-to-face training session.

The training has been developed in partnership with all organisations involved, for example, community services as well as doctors and nurses. It includes details of all the services we might share with you through **Care Navigation**.

Reception teams will never provide clinical advice and must have completed the training before they can help you to reach the best service.

This training will be ongoing as more services are made available through **Care Navigation**.

Are we the first area to use Care Navigation?

No. **Care Navigation** is being rolled out nationally by NHS England. Over 45 other areas across England and Wales are already successfully using the service to help people get the right care from the right person, first time.

Where can I find out more?

You can find out more about **Care Navigation** by picking up a leaflet in your local surgery or

by visiting your surgery’s website.

If you would like someone to explain **Care Navigation** to you in person, a member of your local practice team will be happy to help.