

## Practice Procedure FAQ

We have produced this document to help our patients best understand how they can interact with the practice. If there is anything not covered here, or if you have any queries about the processes below, please contact us using the [Ask the Practice a Question](#) form on our website.

## Appointments and Website

- What is the best way to make an appointment?

We would kindly ask you to try and leave the telephones free for those our patients who are less able to access us online. Therefore, the best way to make an appointment is either using the [Patient Access portal](#) under Online Services on the left of the homepage, or to use the [Ask the Practice a Question](#) form, which can be accessed from the Administration Office button



- How long does it take to get an answer my query on the website?

For Get Help For Any Health Problem we will endeavor to reply within 4 hours. If the request is urgent for the same day, and you have not heard from us, please either re-submit the request or call the practice.

For [Ask the Practice a question](#) and other requests (Registrations, Appointments, we will try and answer within 3 working days.

For Prescriptions, please see below. We try to turn around all prescriptions to the chemist within 3 working days.

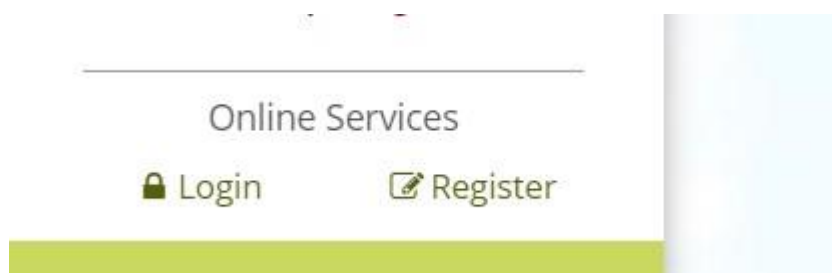
- My problem isn't urgent for the day, but I can't wait for the next routine appointment.

If you think your problem needs attention sooner than the next routine appointment, then the best way is to submit a description about it through our website for the attention of the doctors and nurses so that we can decide how best to handle it. This may still be in a routine appointment, if this is felt to be the most clinically appropriate option.

## Prescriptions

- What is the best way to order a prescription?

Although you can use the Prescription form on the website, the best way is to either sign up for the [NHS App](#) on your smart phone, or register for the [Patient Access portal](#) using the Online Services button on the Home screen



- How long do prescriptions take to be fulfilled after I order them?

Please allow up to 3 working days for your prescription to be returned to the pharmacy. **This means that if you order on a Friday, you may not be able to pick up your medicine until the Wednesday.**

We receive hundreds of requests a day, so please do allow the full 3 working days before contacting the practice. We will deal with them as quickly as we possibly can, but kindly ask you to order in good time before the end of your course. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to honour 'urgent' requests, although we will always do our best to help. If a medicine is very important, such as insulin, then we would please ask you to make sure you keep on top of your orders so that you do not run out.

- I have run out of medicine and need an urgent prescription

Most chemists can provide an emergency supply for you for a few days, please contact your chemist for help in the first instance. If you absolutely cannot get hold of any, then please use the Prescription Request form. The very best way to manage your medicines is via the NHS App or Patient Access App, allowing 3 working days for them to be collected

- I have a prescription note from hospital outpatients, when will this be ready?

If the hospital clinic wishes you to start a medicine immediately, they will give you a prescription from clinic and advise you to collect it from the hospital pharmacy.

If the hospital clinic wishes to change a medicine via letter, then please allow 7 days (5 working days) from receipt of the clinic letter at the practice, to the medicine being returned to the chemist. Please be aware that there is currently a significant delay in letters being typed up from hospital clinic.

- What about private hospital prescriptions?

Please see our [Private Referrals FAQ](#) for fuller details. If the prescription is reasonable to transfer over to NHS care, then we will do so, but again please allow 7 days (5 working days) for this to be complete. If the private doctor wishes you to start it immediately, then they will provide you with a private prescription to take to the chemist. This will involve paying for the full cost of the medication.

Please do not hand in emergency hospital prescriptions - such as from A&E or the Royal Eye Hospital - in at reception as they will not be fulfilled. They must be collected from the Hospital pharmacy.

If the prescription change is from an outpatient clinic letter, then please allow 7 days (5 working days) for this to be processed and updated from the time we receive the letter.

- I have had my prescription put on hold, why?

The doctor might pause your prescription for several reasons, for instance:

- We have tried to contact you on several occasions for an annual medication review but have been unable to do so
- It is a medication you have not had for 6 months or more that we need to ask some questions about
- It is a medication you have never had before

When placing a prescription on hold, we ask the doctors or nurse to leave a message on the which should be visible on [Patient Access](#).

In this instance, you will need to make a routine telephone appointment to discuss this further. Please make an appointment with your usual GP.

- The chemist says my medicines aren't there, but the practice is saying it has been sent. What do I do?

Most pharmacies' computer systems are different to the ones used by all GP surgeries, so on occasion it can take time for a medicine sent from our end to appear on their system. If they are having problems, then please ask for an *EPS Token* from Reception. This is a paper slip you can take to the chemist to help them locate your prescription. You can ask for this using the [Prescription Question](#) form.

- The chemist says a medicine is out of stock or unavailable, what do I do?

Usually they will send a note through to us indicating the problem, which will be passed on to our practice Pharmacist to review. Please allow **up to 3 working days** for this process to take place.

- I want to change my nominated chemist, how can I do this?

Please contact us via the [Prescription Question](#) form on the website or the [Patient Access](#) app to nominate a different chemist

## Test Results

- How long do my results take to come back?

Please see below for a general guide, although some results take longer to be returned from the lab than others

Routine blood tests - up to 48 hours

Urine tests for infection - up to 48 hours

Stool tests for infection - up to 3 days

Stool tests for analysis - up to 5 days

- What do my test results mean?

You need a login to [Patient Access](#) to view your results.

When reviewing your results, the doctor or nurse will put a comment next to them, which is visible in the results panel, like this:

Normal

Satisfactory - please make an appointment to discuss (routine phone GP or nurse please)

Kidney test stable (known CKD)

The writing NOT in brackets is an explanation of the results for you as the patient and any action that is required.

We have tried to make this as self-explanatory as possible, as the doctors and nurses are not able to write individual comments for every single set of results.

Any writing INSIDE the brackets ( ) is usually an instruction or information for clinical staff.

Administrative staff can only read the doctor's comment to you and are not able to provide any more information than this, as they are not clinically trained. If you wish to discuss further, then please make an appointment with the doctor or nurse who ordered the test.

- My results have returned but have not been completed by the doctor or nurse, why?

For safety purposes, please be assured that all results will have been viewed by a doctor or nurse within 48 hours of returning from the laboratory. However, sometimes we will wait to comment on them or complete them as we wish to discuss them with a colleague, wait for other results to return, or speak to the patient individually. Please be assured that we will make them available to you as soon as possible.

- The hospital told me to get my results from the GP, how can I do this?

If you have had tests of any sort undertaken at hospital, then we would ask you to please contact your clinic's secretary to find out the results. It is [good medical practice](#) that the doctor or nurse who ordered the test are the ones who explain the results to you.

For this reason, please do not make an appointment to discuss hospital test results, even if you have been advised to do so by your clinic.

## Referrals

- How will I know if my letter has been sent?

You will receive a text from us when your referral has been typed and sent. This will give you the number to call to follow up about it. Please do not contact the practice to ask about the status of a referral to hospital or community clinic

- I haven't heard about my appointment, can you find out what's going on?

As of November 2020, it was estimated that there are over 100,000 people on waiting lists in Greater Manchester. Because of COVID-19, the hospitals are having to run a reduced outpatient service and most consultations will be made remotely by telephone. As a practice we have no control over hospital waiting times or waiting lists, and we are unable to move patients up the queue.

We appreciate that there is an incredibly long wait for community and hospital services, but we would ask you not to contact the practice about a pending referral or follow up clinic appointment.

It is important to note that the only points of contact that we have for hospital clinics are exactly the same as those available to patients, namely the Integrated Care Gateway and the hospital clinic's secretary.

Our secretarial staff are also incredibly busy and for this reason we would kindly ask you to contact the Gateway on 0161 947 0770 or your hospital doctor's secretary directly to find out more information about your appointment. Your clinic's number can be found at the top of your last letter.

- I have been referred on a Two Week Wait suspected cancer pathway but I haven't heard anything

In this particular instance please do contact the practice and we will make sure to chase this up for you.

## Letters And Reports

Please note that during the COVID-19 pandemic, all non-essential paperwork has been deprioritised on the advice of the Royal College of General Practitioners and British Medical Association ([https://www.rcgp.org.uk/-/media/Files/Policy/A-Z-policy/2020/covid19/RCGPguidance/RCGP\\_BMA-COVID\\_workload\\_prioritisation\\_5112020.ashx?la=en](https://www.rcgp.org.uk/-/media/Files/Policy/A-Z-policy/2020/covid19/RCGPguidance/RCGP_BMA-COVID_workload_prioritisation_5112020.ashx?la=en))

Letters and insurance reports are two such items of work. Please allow us extra time to complete these.

- Why do I have to pay for something that just needs a signature?

Please see the section on [non-NHS work](#) for more detail

Letters and forms that do not directly relate to your treatment are not categorised as NHS work and therefore attract a fee. The fee does not go to the individual doctor, but instead toward paying for the time taken for the clinical time required to review your record, and the secretary and administrative resource required to produce the letter.

Our fees are in line with British Medical Association recommendations and can be found [here](#). • [How long do reports take to complete?](#)

All non-essential paperwork has been deprioritised on advice of the RCGP and BMA and will take longer than usual to complete. Our Data Protection Administrator will be able to give you an indication of how long to expect before a form or report is ready.

- [What happens if I want to see a doctor privately?](#)

We have a full FAQ about the private referral process [here](#)

## Complaints

- We take all complaints seriously and will answer them promptly. All complaints are collected and discussed at the monthly Practice Meeting as an opportunity for improvement and learning.
- If you have a complaint, please contact our Complaints Manager Ms Lisa Johnstone using the Contact the Practice form, or in writing to:

Chorlton Family Practice  
Chorlton Health Centre  
1 Nicolas Rd  
Chorlton, Manchester  
M21 9NJ

- We will acknowledge your complaint and respond fully within 28 days, although a full investigation and formal response may sometimes take longer
- Although we support your right to complain, please note that the Practice operates a Zero Tolerance Policy to abuse of our staff.

Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour directed at any member of staff will be met with a robust response; you may be asked to register with a different practice.