



Mid and South Essex

Get the care you need quicker

Local health and care teams are working hard to make it quicker and easier for you to get the care you need.

Search 'get the care you need quicker' on:
www.midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk

#GetCareQuicker



Being able to get the right care at the right time is vital.

That's why local health and care teams are working hard to help offer you new ways to access healthcare.

You can now:

- Refer yourself to a range of healthcare and community wellbeing services without needing to see a GP first
- Visit a pharmacy first for healthcare advice and treatment on a number of conditions
- Benefit from seeing a wider team of experts and professionals at your GP practice
- Benefit from access to a growing number of health services via the NHS App
- Access care more easily via a range of routes (online, by phone, walk-in).



If you need more information, search 'get the care you need quicker' via www.midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk



Refer yourself

You can now refer yourself to a range of services, offering quicker access, without needing an appointment at your GP surgery. From physiotherapy to mental health support, making it easier than ever to get the help you need.

Some local self-referral services include:

- Support for minor eye conditions
- Sexual health
- Podiatry
- Smoking cessation
- Weight management
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Talking therapies for mental health.

In addition, the Essex Frontline service is your one-stop-shop for accessing a wide range of health and wellbeing services in your local community.

It helps frontline workers and the public to quickly find details on local health and wellbeing services and to contact services through call back and referral options.



Visit a pharmacist

Going to your local pharmacy offers an easy and convenient way to get clinical advice and treatment for a range of common conditions. You usually don't need an appointment, and you can speak to the pharmacist in a private consultation room, if needed.

For minor health concerns, your local pharmacy should be your first port of call. Pharmacists are trained professionals who can offer advice and treatment without the need for an appointment.

Using your local pharmacy first can help you get the care you need quickly. They may also be able to offer treatment and prescription medicine for some conditions, without you needing to see a GP (this is called Pharmacy First).

You can also visit your local pharmacist for blood pressure checks, vaccinations, contraceptive health, and wider health advice and support.



See the wider GP team

General practice teams are made up of a range of health professionals who work at your GP surgery and in the wider community. Working alongside GPs and nurses, they are there to help you get the right care when you need it.

Depending on your clinical needs, you may be seen by a member of the wider practice team. Having access to a range of professionals means you receive the most appropriate care as quickly as possible.

Some of these healthcare professionals include:

-  Care Navigators
-  Clinical Pharmacists
-  Paramedics
-  Physiotherapists
-  Mental Health Practitioners
-  Physician Associates
-  Social Prescribers
-  Healthcare Assistants

Speak to your practice's reception team, or check your practice website to find out more about the team members working in your GP practice.





Use the NHS App

(and other digital tools)

Digital tools are helping millions of patients to access the care and information they need quickly without having to contact their GP practice.



- **NHS App:**
It's now easier than ever to access your records, book appointments, request repeat prescriptions and contact your GP surgery straight from the NHS App.
- **NHS.uk:**
Find information and services to help you manage your health, including the handy symptom checker.
- **GP websites:**
Information about your healthcare team, available services, and how to get in touch with your practice.
- **Online consultation:**
Practices across mid and south Essex use a range of online consultation platforms that allow patients to contact their practice without needing to come into the surgery or wait on the telephone.

If you don't have access to digital technology or the internet, or don't feel confident using digital tools, speak to your practice's reception team. Staff members such as Care Navigators will be able to help you use these digital systems or guide you to other help available (such as local support groups for digital help).

Making access easier

Local health and care teams are working hard to make it easier for you to access services at your GP surgery.

This includes:

- Making it easier to get through on the phone
- Better initial assessment of your clinical needs (also known as 'triage'), so that you get the right care for you, as quickly as possible
- Prioritising urgent needs first, so that people who need to be seen quickly get the right care regardless of when or how they contact their GP surgery.

There are several ways to reach your practice:

- Online (via the practice website, or NHS App)
- By phone, or;
- By visiting the surgery.

However you choose to get in touch with your practice, a dedicated team will respond based on your circumstances. They will help you with the next step of your care, tailored to your needs: it could be a face-to-face appointment, a phone or video consultation, or a simple text or email message. These can be more flexible and often mean they can help you sooner.

Not all GP practices will have the same options for access. For example, some may have appointments available via the NHS App, while others may not. Some will require you to complete an online consultation (or online 'triage') ahead of offering an appointment, while others may not. This will all depend on how each individual practice chooses to manage their appointments.

For support with digital tools, there are a range of local groups that can help.

■ If you live in Essex:

Visit your nearest library to find out about local events to help you access online health services, or visit <https://library-events.essex.gov.uk/event?id=174872>

For general digital support in Essex, Essex County Council offer a range of free courses across Essex.

Visit www.superfastessex.org/get-help-with-digital/skills/digital-support-in-essex

Call the Digital Skills Helpline – 0800 987 4110. It's free to call from any UK mobile or landline and is open to everyone.

■ If you live in Southend-On-Sea:

The South Essex Community Hub provides support to help you build confidence and skills to use a range of digital tools. Contact SECH on 01702 611199 Monday to Friday, 10 am to 12 pm and 1 pm to 4 pm.

■ If you live in Thurrock:

Libraries in Thurrock offer a range of digital skills courses. Visit your nearest library to find out more: www.thurrockopportunities.co.uk/i-need-advice/careers-advice/digital-skills

■ Additionally:

Barclays Digital Wings can be used to help you grow digital skills.

Visit <https://digital.wings.uk.barclays> for more information.

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