

## Making the Most of Digital Systems: A Guide for Patients

Digital systems are transforming healthcare, and whether you love or dislike them they are here to stay. From ordering prescriptions online to accessing medical records, digital tools can empower you to take control of your care. This guide explains how you can make the most of these systems. Please remember though that all IT systems require upgrades and can require some downtime, like us all. This month we will look at three aspects: **Appointments, Medical records and Repeat Prescriptions**

### 1. Booking and Managing Appointments

We provide a range of online appointments. These allow you to:

- Book and cancel appointments at your convenience.
- Set reminders to avoid missing your scheduled visits.

Please be aware that at the current time, we cannot offer all appointments online however our Enhanced Access (evening) appointments are always all offered online. We also use a tool called AccuRx to offer a range of appointments via what is known as Self-Book. This does require a Smart mobile phone to be able to book into these appointments. We use Self-Book for a range of appointments such as covid, flu, RSV as well as a range of other types of care.

### 2. Accessing Your Medical Records

Digital systems give patients access to their General Practice medical records and other provider data if a patient has consented to share documents with us, which will be uploaded in time. Benefits include:

- Reviewing your test results, prescriptions, and medical history.
- Spotting errors or outdated information and notifying us via our web site.
- Sharing records with other healthcare providers for continuity of care including a hospital or community clinic.

Most hospitals and clinics now offer secure patient portals or apps. Please sign up for one of these if under the care of a clinic or hospital as it can take some weeks before copies of hospital/clinic letters are shared with your GP Practice.

### 3. Ordering Repeat Prescriptions

You can request repeat prescriptions online through our website and/or apps like the NHS App. Please note that we need a **minimum of 5 working days** for a prescription to be correctly processed. Trying to circumvent this creates additional issues and puts our staff at risk. We ask that all patients observe the 5 working days.

Features include:

- Quick reordering of medications.
- Choosing to collect prescriptions at a pharmacy or have them delivered (only certain apps provide these services).

Please note that it is only medications which your GP has put on 'Repeat' that are available to order online. Medications which are 'Acute' i.e. you have been prescribed as a One-off will not be available to order online.

#### **4. Support for Those Less Familiar with Technology**

If you're not confident using digital tools:

- Please ask Reception if you wish to have an online account set up and have not been able to do this directly through the NHS App. If a family member needs support, consider having a Proxy account available for Adults and Children (must have Parental responsibility)
- Friends, family or carers can often assist.
- We can arrange for a member of our Primary Care Network to come and talk to any local groups of our patients about the NHS App. Please let Reception know.

Please note that with Proxy Access for children at the Ages of 11 and 16, access drops off and must be reapplied for. This is a government 'rule' that the practice has to observe.

#### **Key Takeaways**

- Digital tools offer convenience and improve access to healthcare services.
- Online portals, apps and our messaging system help for efficient communication.
- Protect your personal data and seek help from some trusted if you're unsure how to use digital systems.
- Our Reception team are still here taking calls between 08:00 – 18:30 Monday to Friday.

Making the most of these tools can enhance your healthcare experience and empower you to play an active role in your well-being.

#### **New Starters in 2024**

We keep our website up to date with changes to our Team. This can be found in Practice Information at: <https://www.watershipdownhealth.com/practice-information/>

In 2024, we have been joined by Dr Helen Thomas and Dr Ali Al Musawi.

Our Primary Care Network has recruited a number of new starters including:

Bethan Woodruff, Registered Mental Health Nurse  
Juliet Wells, Advanced Mental Health Pharmacist  
Jennifer Hogan, Psychological Therapist  
Oliver Mildmay, Peer Support Practitioner (Andover MIND)