

# **Accurx – Online Consultations for General Practice**

## **Overview**

Accurx is a digital communication and workflow platform used across most GP practices in England to support remote communication, triage and demand management.

### Why our practice is using Accurx

Accurx supports modern general practice by helping practices to:

- Improve communication with patients
- Reduce telephone demand
- Support digital access and online requests
- Improve workflow efficiency
- Enable remote consultations and follow-ups

### Benefits for Patients

- Easier way to contact the practice
- Ability to send photos or documents
- Faster responses for simple queries
- Avoid unnecessary appointments

### Benefits for Practice Staff

- Reduces call handling
- Enables structured triage
- Allows quicker resolution of simple issues
- Improves documentation in patient records

## Key Functions:

### Patient Communication

- Two-way messaging with patients (SMS or digital link)
- Patients can reply with text, photos, or documents
- Messages can include advice links, attachments, or forms

- Conversations can be saved directly into the patient record

### Questionnaires & Data Collection

- Structured Florey questionnaires for clinical information gathering
- Used for:
  - Long Term Condition monitoring
  - Health screening
  - Medication reviews
  - Pre-appointment information
- Responses can be coded into the patient record (e.g., SNOMED codes)

### Batch Messaging

- Send messages to large cohorts of patients
- Common uses:
  - vaccination invites
  - screening campaigns
  - practice updates
  - public health messaging

### Online Triage / Request Management

- Patients can submit online requests which flow into a shared inbox for triage.
- Supports total triage models in general practice.

### Self-Booking

- Send appointment booking links for patients to schedule their own appointments.

### Video Consultation

- Secure video consultations accessible via a link without additional software.

## Operational Considerations for Practices

Workflow design – practices should define:

- Who manages the inbox
- Admin vs clinical triage
- Response time expectations
- When messaging is appropriate vs appointment

Without defined processes, digital systems can increase pressure.

## NHS App Functionality and Integration

Accurx integration enables patients to:

- Submit online consultation or patient triage requests directly through the NHS App
- Receive practice messages and notifications in their NHS App inbox
- Receive appointment reminders and self-booking links via the NHS App (with automatic SMS fallback)

Operational notes for practices:

- Messages are delivered to the NHS App first where the patient has it installed and notifications enabled, helping reduce SMS usage
- If a patient does not open the message within a set timeframe, the system automatically falls back to SMS
- Individual NHS App messaging (including attachments and questionnaires) is expanding through pilots and phased roll-outs

## Governance

Robust governance is essential to ensure the safe, effective, and compliant use of Accurx within general practice. Practices must ensure that digital consultation tools are implemented in line with national standards, information governance requirements, and clinical safety regulations.

### Core Requirements

Each practice should develop and maintain the following key governance documents:

### 1. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

A clear SOP should outline how Accurx is used within the practice. This should include:

- How incoming patient requests are received, triaged, and managed
- Defined roles and responsibilities (e.g. admin vs clinical triage)
- How staff will complete on a patient's behalf via telephone or in person
- Expected response times and service standards
- Appropriate use of messaging vs appointments
- Escalation processes for urgent or complex cases
- Contingency plans for system downtime or high demand
- Training requirements/include in induction process

The SOP should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in workflow, staffing, or system functionality.

### 2. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

A DPIA must be completed to assess and mitigate risks associated with handling patient data through Accurx. This should cover:

- What patient data is collected and processed
- How data is transmitted, stored, and integrated into clinical systems
- Risks to confidentiality, integrity, and availability of data
- Measures in place to minimise risks (e.g. encryption, access controls)
- Compliance with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018

Practices should ensure their DPIA reflects local use of Accurx and is reviewed periodically.

### 3. Clinical Safety (DCB0160 Compliance)

Accurx use must comply with the NHS Digital Clinical Risk Management Standard (DCB0160). Practices are responsible for:

- Appointing a Clinical Safety Officer (CSO)
- Maintaining a Clinical Safety Case Report
- Identifying and mitigating clinical risks associated with digital triage and communication
- Ensuring safe workflows to prevent missed or delayed diagnoses

This includes considering risks such as incomplete patient information, inappropriate use of online consultations, or delays in reviewing requests.

## Accurx Training and Support Resources:

### Patient Triage Overview

- [Submitting a test Patient Triage request](#)
- [Managing a Patient Triage request](#)
- [Managing incoming Patient Triage requests](#)

### Practice Setup

- [Accessing Accurx training pages](#)
- [Step-by-step guide to setting up Patient Triage](#)
- [Quick tips for implementing Accurx in your practice](#)
- [Using Patient Triage template policies](#)
- [Uploading Patient Triage to your practice website](#)
- [Suspending the \*Medical Requests\* option for patients when required](#)

### Organisation Settings

- [Managing workflow teams](#)
- [Verifying patient details](#)
- [Adding self-referral links within Patient Triage](#)
- [Saving outcomes to the patient record](#)
- [Managing repeat prescription settings, including redirecting patients to the NHS App](#)
- [Appointment Reminders: An Introduction | Accurx Help Centre](#)
- [Appointment Reminders: How to guide | Accurx Help Centre](#)
- [Self-Book: FAQs | Accurx Help Centre](#)

### Submitting a Patient Triage Request

- [How reception teams can submit a request on behalf of a patient](#)
- [Submitting a request for another person \(e.g. carers or parents\)](#)

### Managing the Patient Triage Inbox

- [Using the inbox to review and triage requests](#)
- [Managing patient responses](#)
- [Handling questionnaire responses within the inbox](#)
- [Using the Live Assign dashboard to support request management.](#)

## Post-Migration Guidance for Practices

As your practice transitions from iPLATO / MyGPApp to Accurx and the NHS App, several important changes will take effect. Functions that were previously automated through the old apps will now need to be managed directly by your practice team.

### Friends and Family Test (FFT)

- Practices will no longer receive automatic FFT reports via the previous apps.
- You will now need to collect, manage, and report FFT feedback directly.
- Options include:
  - Using Accurx surveys or questionnaires to collect feedback
  - Manually sending FFT links via email or SMS
  - Uploading completed responses to NHS systems as required

**Tip:** Use this helpful guide to set up your own Friends and Family Test [Guidance on FFT Data \(Accurx\).pdf](#) within this link is information on how to make a FFT through MS Forms, it is important to note that practices will need to raise a service desk ticket for access to MS Forms if you don't already have it.

### Patient Access Changes

- Patients will now access services via the NHS App instead of MyGPApp

- Actions practices should take:
  - Update patient communications (website, SMS, posters) to reference the NHS App your new online consultation provider, Accurx.
  - Guide patients through NHS App registration if needed
  - Ensure appointment and prescription settings are enabled in your practice system for NHS App access
  - Find patients registered for MyGp to inform of the change – see link [Which of my patients has the NHS app? - iPLATO](#)

### Notifications and Messaging

- Automated notifications previously handled by the old apps will no longer be sent.
- Practices should:
  - Set up Accurx messaging templates for reminders, admin queries, and health campaigns
  - Consider using batch messaging to inform patients of the transition

### Workflow Adjustments

- Review inbox and triage workflows to accommodate:
  - Patient messages coming through Accurx instead of old apps
  - Online requests via NHS App and how these feed into the practice system
- Ensure staff understand which requests are digital, clinical, or administrative to prevent missed items

### Staff Communication and Training

- All staff should be trained on new processes, including:
  - Collecting FFT feedback manually
  - Using Accurx for patient messaging and questionnaires

- Supporting patients transitioning to the NHS App

## Managing Temporary NHS App Disruption During Go-Live

During the transition from existing online consultation suppliers (e.g. PATCHS, eConsult or AskMyGP) to Accurx, practices may experience a temporary disruption in NHS App online consultation functionality. The NHS App functionality may take approximately 1–2 weeks to become fully operational following supplier changes.

### Recommended Communication Approach

Practices should prepare proactive patient communications before go-live to reduce confusion and minimise avoidable contact with reception teams.

### Key Messages for Patients

- Temporary disruption to NHS App online consultation access may occur during the changeover period.
- Patients can continue to contact the practice through the practice website and existing telephone routes.
- Online consultation functionality through the NHS App is expected to be restored within approximately 1–2 weeks following migration.
- Patients should continue to access urgent care through normal urgent care routes where required.

### Suggested Communication Channels

- Practice website notices
- Waiting room posters
- Social media posts
- Telephony greeting/holding message
- SMS messages where appropriate

### Example Website Notice

Dear Patients,



As part of improvements to our online consultation services, our practice is moving to a new system called Accurx on (date).

During this transition, online consultation access through the NHS App may be temporarily unavailable for up to 1–2 weeks.

During this period, patients can continue to contact the practice using the online consultation link available on our practice website or by contacting reception as usual.

Help will be available from the practice, to complete the form if required.

We apologise for any inconvenience and thank you for your patience whilst these improvements are completed.

#### Example Social Media Message

We are upgrading our online consultation system to Accurx.

Please note that NHS App online consultation access may be temporarily unavailable during the changeover period. Patients can still contact us via our practice website or by telephone.

We expect NHS App functionality to be restored within 1–2 weeks. Thank you for your patience.

#### Example Telephony Message

As part of improvements to our online consultation services, our practice is moving to a new system called Accurx on (date).

During this transition, online consultation access through the NHS App may be temporarily unavailable for up to 1–2 weeks.

During this period, patients can continue to contact the practice using the online consultation link available on our practice website or by contacting reception as usual.

#### Example SMS Message

Our practice is changing online consultation provider to Accurx on (date). NHS App access may be temporarily unavailable for up to 1–2 weeks. Please use our practice website for online requests during this time. Thank you for your patience.

### Quick Checklist for Practices

| Task                                                                                               | Status                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Inform patients of supplier change                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Update website and posters                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Set up FFT collection process including raising a service desk ticket for MS Forms creation access | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Create Accurx messaging templates                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Train staff on new workflows                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Monitor incoming requests and messages                                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Governance including DPIA, Clinical Safety and SOP                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Notify re NHS App disruption                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |