

Tips for running a digital health drop-in session in a GP Surgery

Organising an NHS App digital drop-in session can support patients in managing their healthcare conveniently. To ensure the session is effective and well-received, consider the following tips:

Find a dedicated space and time

Set up the digital drop-in session in a space away from other patients to ensure privacy and minimise distractions. This could be a designated room or a quiet corner within the surgery. (if this is not possible, alternative locations such as libraries can be fantastic for drop in support, please see the guide for hosting NHS app Digital Drop ins in the Community)

Welcome and Introduction

When a patient arrives:

- 1. Greet the patient and introduce yourself by name and role.** For example:

"Hello, my name is [Name] and I'm work in the surgery as a [xxxx] . I can help patients get started with the NHS App and answer any questions about using it."

Use clear, jargon-free language and speak at a pace that is comfortable for the patient.

- 2. Briefly explain what support is available during the session.** This helps set expectations and reassures patients that they are in the right place. For example:

"We're running this session to help you use the NHS App. We can help you download the app, create a an account, log in to the App, and understand what you can do using the App and help you to use them"

Explain that support is tailored to the individual's needs and that there is no expectation that they already have digital skills.

3. **Ask open questions** to understand why the patient has attended and what they would like help with. Examples include:

- "What would you like help with today?"
- "Have you used the NHS App before?"
- "Do you already have an account, or are you starting from scratch?"
- "Is there a specific feature you'd like to use, such as ordering prescriptions or viewing appointments?"

Listen carefully to their response and allow them time to explain. Some patients may have multiple questions or may not be sure exactly what support they need.

Once you understand their needs, briefly explain how you can help and what the session will involve.

4. **Explain what you can and cannot help with.** This helps manage expectations and protects patient confidentiality. For example:

"I can help you use the NHS App and show you how the different features work. However, I cannot access your medical records, view personal health information, make changes to your healthcare records, or provide medical advice."

It is also important to explain that patients should enter their own personal information, passwords, PINs, and security codes wherever possible. For example:

"For your privacy and security, I'll ask you to enter any passwords, security codes, or personal information yourself. If you get stuck, I can talk you through the process."

Provide resources and guides

- **Paper resources:** Have printed guides and resources readily available. These should include step-by-step instructions on how to download and navigate the NHS App.
- **Easy read guides:** Easy read guides can be great to support people with additional needs to understand the benefits of the app, what it can do and how they can register.

Promote the session

Community engagement: Collaborate with local community groups and libraries to promote the session. They can help spread the word to ensure it reaches the right people that need support. These could be local churches, health centres, sports clubs, coffee mornings, or anywhere else people who might struggle to use the NHS app might pop in to.

Targeted outreach: Use flyers, social media posts, and announcements in the surgery to inform patients about the drop-in session.

You can use the suggested social media and text message content here
<https://digital.nhs.uk/services/nhs-app/toolkit>

You can download promotional materials here including posters, leaflets, social media images <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/nhs-app/toolkit>

ID requirements

NHS [Information about ID requirements](#) for registering an app account.

Advance notice: Clearly inform people in advance about the identification they need to be able to sign up for the app. This information can be included in promotional materials. This prevents people from taking the time to come along and not actually be able to get signed up or use the app that day.

ID alternatives: Reassure individuals without ID that they can still attend. Explain how the surgery can confirm their identity and use the **linkage key** to assist them.

Good practice during support

Do:

- ✓ Be patient and encouraging.
- ✓ Use plain language.
- ✓ Allow patients to hold and use their own device where possible
- ✓ Support independence..

- ✓ Respect confidentiality.
- ✓ Check understanding throughout the session.

Don't:

- ✗ Hold the patient's device in your hands
- ✗ Ask patients to share passwords with you.
- ✗ Enter personal information on behalf of patients
- ✗ Access patient records
- ✗ Provide medical advice.
- ✗ Keep copies of personal information.

Additional considerations

- **Trained staff:** Ensure staff or volunteers leading the session are well-trained in using the NHS App and can answer questions effectively.
- **Have devices:** Where possible, have a phone or tablet that someone can use if they don't own their own digital device
- **Patient support:** Offer 1-1 assistance to those who may struggle with technology, ensuring they leave the session feeling confident in using the app. Signpost digitally excluded patients to local digital support for help with access to skills training, mobile data and devices by clicking [here](#) and using the interactive map.
- **Feedback collection:** After the session, gather feedback from participants to improve future events and address any concerns or suggestions.

Using these tips, your NHS App digital drop-in session will be organised, informative, and accessible, helping patients to better manage their healthcare needs.