

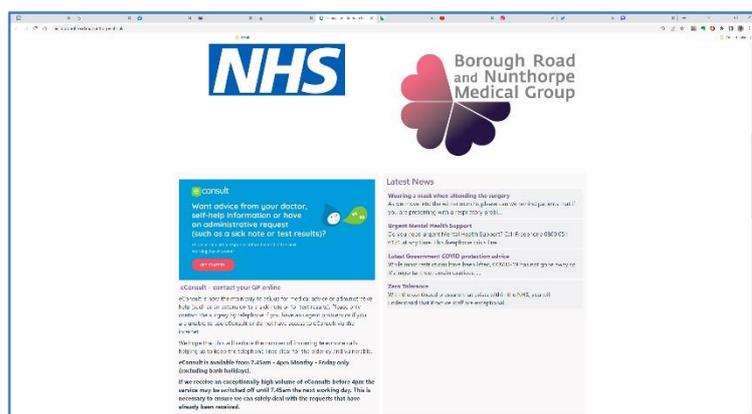
Borough Road and Nunthorpe Medical Group



Practice and Patient Forum Newsletter Special Edition – The Appointments System

In mid-January the Practice changed the way that requests for appointments are managed. This ensures that you, the patient, are supported by the right medical professional, in the right way, at the right time. There are three ways that you can ask for medical help:

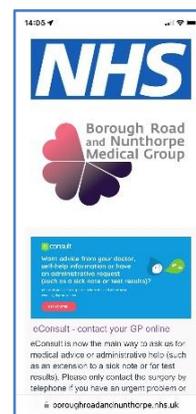
1. The best and most efficient way for you and the Practice is to use our online system eConsult. To use eConsult you need to access the internet from your computer, tablet, or smartphone. You will find eConsult on the front page of our practice website as shown in the images below.



Computer



Tablet



Smartphone

Access the internet and go to the Practice Website www.boroughroadandnunthorpe.nhs.uk. Once here, scroll down the front page until you see the bright blue eConsult box, then click on it. Follow the instructions. If you can use social media or Google (for example) you should easily be able to use eConsult. eConsult asks questions to allow the doctor to assess your needs and to arrange the next step for you. eConsult is open on weekdays from 7:45 am to 4:00 pm. It may close earlier if the number of requests received is very high (i.e., on a Monday).

2. If you are unable to use the internet this way, or if it's after 4:00 pm or eConsult is not available then you should phone the Practice on 01642 243668 or 01642 315390.



3. You can also drop into either of our surgeries in person between 7:30 am and 6:00 pm weekdays and talk to the staff.



If you are unable to use the online service eConsult and choose to telephone or come into the surgery in person to request medical help, you will still be asked to provide details of your symptoms and needs. The staff member will send the information you provide to the doctor to assess and arrange the next step for you.

What happens next?

There is a doctor on duty from 7:45 am to 6:00 pm who reviews all the requests for medical help coming in. The doctor has the information that you have already provided and so can decide what should happen next. The doctor works alongside a team of support staff to organise the next steps.

The doctor may decide the next step should be; a same day face to face or telephone consultation with a doctor, nurse practitioner, nurse etc; a less urgent consultation with the same range of staff; advice by email or text message; perhaps the issue of a prescription, advice to visit your local pharmacy – this list is long but the information you provide will help the doctor to make this decision.

Whatever next step is decided, the supporting staff will contact you by your preferred route (telephone, email, or text). **For possibly urgent matters they will always use the telephone.**

It is therefore vital that you keep your contact details up to date (mobile and landline phone numbers; email addresses and home address) and always provide the correct contact details when you make a request. This will ensure the team can contact you when they need to.

IMPORTANT - Please remain available to answer the telephone and regularly check your email / phone messages for a response from the doctor following your initial request for medical help.

(You can update your contact details via the website: there's a prominent form on the front page: or you can drop into the surgery in person to do this)

Some Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why does eConsult ask so many questions?

A: The questions asked depend on the answers you have already given. It's important that nothing is missed. There are built in checks to spot the risk of your problem being urgent or serious – these will be highlighted to the doctor.

Q: Why does eConsult tell me to go to A&E or call 999?

A: You have described symptoms that are potentially life threatening – **YOU SHOULD TAKE THE ADVICE.**

Q: How quickly will the practice contact me?

A: At the latest it will be by the end of the next working day, but the Practice does its best to be faster than that. Clearly urgent matters are dealt with very quickly. Please make sure the Practice can contact you when they need to.

Q: What about requests for non-medical help?

A: These go through the same process but are picked up by the support staff and acted upon as quickly as possible.

Q: Why does eConsult close at 4:00 pm, and sometimes earlier?

A: The doctor reviewing the eConsult needs to have the opportunity to get to the end of the list by the end of the day – they work until 6:00 pm. Sometimes the number of requests for help is very high (for example on Mondays) so the system is closed early for the same reason.

Q: Why can't we just go back to using the phone?

A: The number of phone calls received daily was unmanageable leading to huge frustration and stress for both you and the staff. There are fewer calls now although the numbers are still high. We anticipate that over time as more patients learn about how to use the online system eConsult things will improve further. We are looking at ways to help patients who want to learn. Please let us know if you would like our help to do this.

Thank you for reading to the end. Please try the online system eConsult if you have internet access.

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 www.facebook.com/patientforum.brn

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