

# NHS SW GP Standardised Website

## Terms of Engagement Phase One



## Table of Contents

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	<b>1</b>
<b>NHS SW GP Standardised Website</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
Purpose	3
In Scope	3
Out of Scope	5
Criteria for selection	5
Collaboration	10
Meetings	10
Conflicts of Interest	11
Confidentiality	11

## Introduction

The following Terms of Engagement ('Terms') apply in respect to participating GP Practices / PCNs in the South West region wishing to take part in the "GP Practice Standardised Website project" phase one, referred to in this document as 'the project'.

### Purpose

Ensuring online journeys are highly usable and highly accessible are a priority for NHS England. They are a key part of the Delivery Plan for recovering access to primary care, which was published in May 2023. Websites should work on the most commonly used assistive technologies.

GP Practice websites should have the NHS identity to give patients confidence and trust that they are in the right place. Trust is at the heart of healthcare. The NHS logo and its distinctive blue identity are widely recognised by the public<sup>1</sup>.

As part of the delivery / implementation of the Modern General Practice Access Model (MGPAM)<sup>2</sup>:

- Understanding and use of demand and capacity.
- Care navigation and triage.
- Improving the telephony journey.
- Improving the patient online access journey.
- Non patient facing workload management.

### In Scope

- ✓ Commitment to Accessibility: We have achieved a WCAG<sup>3</sup> AA rating for the new website template, that will work on the most commonly used assistive technologies.
- ✓ The website is part of the delivery / implementation of the Modern General Practice Access Model.
- ✓ Compliance with GP Contract regulations 2020, and the GP Website Benchmarking Tool.

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<sup>1</sup> NHS England » Creating a highly usable and accessible GP website for patients

<sup>2</sup> NHS England » Transition cover and transformation support funding to move to a Modern General Practice Access Model

<sup>3</sup> Understanding WCAG 2.2 - Service Manual - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

- ✓ Patient experience improved – from reassurance of NHS identity to navigation and self-service making it more likely they will return and use digital channels.
- ✓ NHS design components including logo and NHS domain.
- ✓ Website designed with a ‘mobile first’ approach.

The pilot phase was completed in February, involved working with 26 Practices (15 Practices and 3 PCNs). The outcome is a standardised template across 18 websites.

Phase one process will be open to PCNs or GP Practices from across the South West ICBs, in particular but not exclusively from Dorset, Gloucestershire and Cornwall. They will be asked to express an interest in this project and will be selected to join based on selection criteria, webinar engagement and agreement to the Terms of Engagement. This process will be supported by both internal and external communication and engagement specialists.

PCN / Practice leads engaging in the pilot will receive a comprehensive support offer that includes:

- training on the website content management system (CMS) for each practice.
- adding existing content to the new website ‘for and with’ the patient in mind.
- reporting on website analytics (as part of a standard support package) to help understand user behaviours.
- single point of contact offering ‘hands-on’ support during project before ‘go-live’.
- comprehensive communications plan.
- raise awareness campaign – driven by communication specialists.
- step by step guidance for practices.
- digital marketing materials.
- the costs of hosting and support for the first year.
- evaluation at 3 and 6 months of phase 1 going-live.
- a standardised template – one which will be locked down but allows for localisation of content, consistent use of language, has uniform NHS / joint branding and is built on a secure platform with the latest accessibility standards.

- Any PCNs and/or GP practices involved in the project should expect the standardised website to be optimised based on the results from the A/B split testing. Incremental improvements may be necessary to streamline and improve the user journey.

## **Out of Scope**

- The quality of navigation once the user has selected their task from the landing page to the e-consultation platform.
- Support of any hardware or services, provision of any licenses or other support function not explicitly defined within this agreement.
- Patient identifiable data is not required for this project.
- Involvement in procurement following the initial 12 months hosting and support.

## **Criteria for selection**

PCNs/Practices willing to be involved in the pilot will be subject to the following criteria for the duration of the project. This includes up to go-live of the new website and hosting and support thereafter for 12 months.

## **Time Management and Resourcing**

Websites are a vital resource, and the longer-term success of this project will rely on your website being updated regularly with relevant content to help inform your patients. Practices involved in phase one will be expected to commit resources to ensure.

We will need at least 2 nominees for these roles:

- Accountability for decision making regarding changes to the website.
- Responsibility for regular content management.

## **Standardised website template**

In this project, standardisation refers to:

- Equity of approach to GP Practices who are involved in the project.
- A standard repeatable website template for GP Practices.
- A standard template using key tasks\*, that allows for localisation of content with consistent use of language, has an NHS identity, on a secure platform with latest accessibility standards.
- A unified approach to the launch phase for all GP Practices involved in the project.

- Equity of support provided for GP Practices who are involved in the project.
- Parity in the evaluation of the impact of the new website using Cloud-Based Telephony and website analytics data, and a qualitative data collection method.

*\*The fundamentals of the template must remain unchanged for at least the period of funded hosting and support.*

## **Use of the Standard for creating health content**

NHS England is committed to improving the quality of health and care content that is available to the public, patients and health and care professionals. We believe information that is clear, accurate, evidence-based, up-to-date and easy to use allows people, patients and communities to become better informed and more involved in their health and care.

The NHS has created a new standard for creating health content that outlines some essential requirements and best practice guidance for creating high quality health content. It's designed for any organisation that produces health and care information<sup>4</sup>.

The standard replaces NHS England's former assessment and certification scheme known as the Information Standard, which has now closed.

## **Commitment to Accessibility**

We have achieved a WCAG AA<sup>5</sup> rating for the new website template, that will work on the most commonly used assistive technologies. This means that the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) which are technical standards on web accessibility developed by the World Wide Web Consortium, has given an AA mid-range conformance level for this website.

Web accessibility means that websites, tools, and technologies are designed and developed so that people with disabilities can use them. More specifically, people can:

- perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with the Web.
- contribute to the Web.
- Web accessibility encompasses all disabilities that affect access to the Web, including:
  - auditory
  - cognitive
  - neurological

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<sup>4</sup> [NHS England » Standard for creating health content](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Understanding WCAG 2.2 - Service Manual - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- physical
- speech
- visual

Web accessibility also benefits people without disabilities, for example:

- people using mobile phones, smart watches, smart TVs, and other devices with small screens, different input modes, etc.
- older people with changing abilities due to ageing.
- people with “temporary disabilities” such as a broken arm or lost glasses.
- people with “situational limitations” such as in bright sunlight or in an environment where they cannot listen to audio.
- people using a slow Internet connection, or who have limited or expensive bandwidth.

### **Benefits led data collection**

The Content Management System and the back-end data analytics capabilities meet or exceed current NHS security standards, and fully comply with current NHS data and protocol standards and fully considers clinical safety elements of any patient data flow / patient sensitive data which may flow through links supplied in website.

Analytics will be added to each website and this data will offer valuable information on how your users are interacting with your website.

It is important that benefits can be realised from this project (for Practices, NHSE and patients). You will be shown how your analytics can help improve the user experience and you will be expected to monitor and improve your website by reviewing this data regularly.

We need to collect baseline data for the purposes of evaluation. This will include access to Google Analytics on your current website.

You will be required to provide up to 12 months telephony data for the purpose of baseline and measurement of benefits. We will also collect your Telephony data regularly. The purpose is to enable us to analyse trends in a potential channel shift from telephony to the website and other online resources. Please see the confidentiality section below.

### **Domain name registration**

All participants will be expected to fully engage and agree<sup>6</sup> to their website having a registered NHS domain name.

## **GP Online registration**

Register with a GP surgery<sup>7</sup> gives all GP practices in England a standard way of taking registrations online. It makes it simpler and more accessible for patients to register with a GP and easier for practices to manage registrations.

The service:

- allows new patients to register online.
- checks they live within the GP practice catchment area.
- matches them to their NHS number, with around a 90% success rate.
- sends the registration details to the GP, by e-mail, in a standard format.

In the future there is a plan to integrate the service directly with GP clinical systems.

The service is designed and run by NHS England and is free for NHS GP practices to use.

All GP surgeries in England must offer the national Register with a GP surgery service to patients from October 2024, as outlined in the GP contract<sup>8</sup>.

## **Appointments and other key tasks**

From extensive research carried out in 2023, the key user tasks for a GP Practice website are:

- Making an appointment.
- Healthcare advice.
- Requesting a fit / sick note.
- Ordering a prescription.
- Practice information – opening times etc.
- Test results.
- Registering with a GP Practice.

The design of each Practice website revolves around these tasks.

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<sup>6</sup> Domain names - NHS England Digital

<sup>7</sup> Register with a GP surgery - NHS England Digital

<sup>8</sup> NHS England » Arrangements for the GP contract in 2024/25



This project incorporates the recommendations of the guidance from NHSE Primary Care Transformation team to deliver an accessible standard website for GP Practices to act as self-service for patients, that will improve the telephone journey by reducing the % of telephone calls at 8am, and the patient online access journey. It will also have the trustworthy and confidence building NHS identity.

### **Auditing of contents of current websites**

Part of the onboarding process is the auditing of the contents of your website. This will include external links to ensure the information is still valid, relevant and secure for the patients to access.

Practices will be required to work with our supplier to agree the final contents that can be migrated to the new standardised website template. Practices will be expected to:

- Choose a time slot from the onboarding timetable that will be provided.
- Make changes to the contents as necessary.
- Agree contents that will be migrated.

### **User Acceptance Testing**

At times it will be necessary to make changes to the website in response to quality improvements. This process may involve users to test and sign off changes before they are deployed. Practices will be expected to:

- Nominate members at the appropriate time.
- Meet the deadlines for participation.

### **Training**

The success of the project will require transfer of knowledge from participating PCNs/Practices during the course of the project. Training will be provided to nominees:

- On a one-to one
- As a group
- User guides and video sessions

### **Financial**

Phase one of the project will be funded by NHS England. PCNs/Practices taking part in phase one will have their hosting and support costs paid for the first 12 months from the time their website goes live; after which time, these costs will be borne by each Practice as is the current arrangement. The current website costs borne by Practices (typically c. £550 p.a.) may not be reduced as this is not the primary objective of this project.

It is essential that public money for the NHS continues to be spent with care, which includes ensuring that financial risk to the overall health and care system is robustly managed, and that any financial interventions, especially regarding the delivery of key objectives, are targeted, timely, and measurable. To achieve this, NHS England must continue to manage risks and pressures within their resource limits and continue to demonstrate effective financial and risk management planning, working with government to adjust plans if necessary<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, once engaged with the project, the option to withdraw can only occur before mobilisation of resources is complete.

## **Evaluation**

PCNs/Practice leads will be expected to fully participate in the project with evaluation(s) conducted after 3 months of a site going live. This may include case studies and online form completion. Learning from the pilot will continue to be used to improve the website whilst Phase one is ongoing.

## **Collaboration**

All participants will be expected to fully engage for the duration of the project and will be accountable to the project lead. The utmost decorum will always be displayed, and all participants will engage with positive intent and conduct themselves in a professional and convivial manner.

Participants in the project are expected to :

- Manage their own emotional responses.
- Maintain good healthy working relationships and respect other people's views and listen to others.
- Resolve conflicts.

The success of this project is a collaboration between Practices, website supplier and NHSE, therefore participants are expected to actively participate.

- Always assume positive intent.
- Accept and support team decisions.

## **Meetings**

Meetings will be held monthly, and notifications will be issued in advance. These meetings will be interactive to encourage participants to come prepared and get involved.

- Attend all meetings or send an informed deputy.

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<sup>9</sup> The government's 2023 mandate to NHS England - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

- Actively participate and share ideas and/ or best practice.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest must be declared at the start of the project. If conflicts of interest arise during the project this must be announced, and appropriate requirements and procedures will be put in place.

### **Confidentiality**

Each party agrees to treat as confidential, during this project, information relating to the other party's confidential information.

NHS England will not disclose any confidential information / data from PCN / GP Practice.

I confirm I have read, understand, and accept the Rules of Engagement that must be followed as part of the project.

**On behalf of NHS England:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date:-

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**GP Partner XX Practice /PCN Director**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_