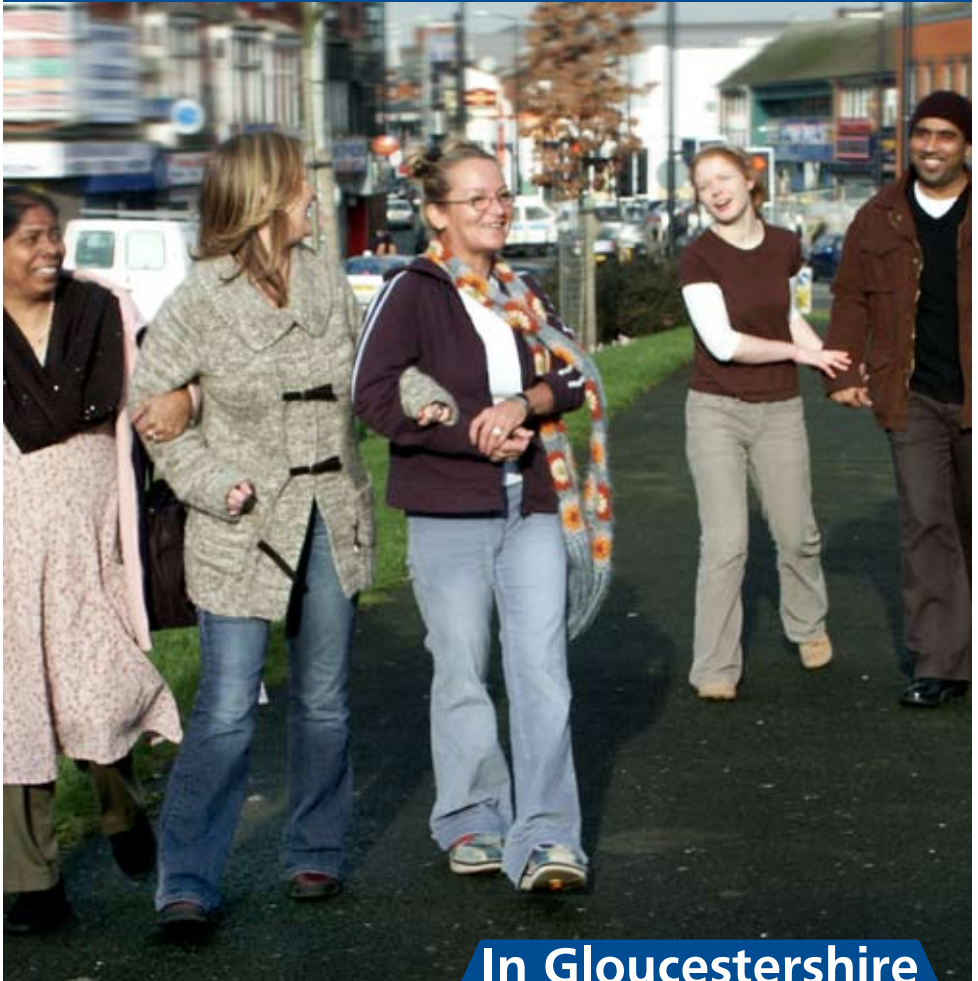


Patient Choice

A new way to choose and book your hospital appointment



In Gloucestershire

Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for everyone who needs to see a specialist doctor. It explains how the new Choose and Book service works. It allows you to choose your hospital or local service and book an appointment.

Why is the new Choose and Book service being introduced?

At the moment, if your GP decides you need to see a specialist, he/she writes a letter, and the hospital allocates a date. That process can take several weeks, and the date offered may not suit you.

Choose and Book is a new IT system designed to give you more say in where and when you're treated so you can fit your hospital appointment in with your life, not the other way round.

Local patients have said that they would like to be given a choice of hospital. Shorter waiting times, expected quality of care and recommendations from your GP or a family member could all play a part in helping you make your decision on where you are treated.

How does Choose and Book work?

If your GP decides that you need to see a specialist, he/she will print out an 'Appointment Request' form, which includes your 'Unique Booking Reference Number' and lists the hospitals or local services available to you.

You will be able to choose from this list and book an appointment by calling your chosen hospital or local service. You can call straight away after seeing your GP, or at any time up to two weeks later, if you want more time to think about your choice or preferred appointment date and time.

Your password and reference number

You will need to agree a password with your GP or one of the practice team. This will be used to make sure your information is kept secure on the computer system. When you call your chosen hospital they will identify you by your password and the reference number on your Appointment Request form.

DON'T FORGET YOUR PASSWORD!

Making your Choice

- You will usually be able to choose from a menu of four or five hospitals or other local services e.g. Specialist GPs.
- Your GP might recommend a particular hospital or local service to you.
- You can get information on the various hospitals and services by calling the Choose and Book Appointments Line on 0845 608 8888, or via the internet at www.nhs.uk. The Appointments Line has interpretation and text telephone facilities.
- You may want to compare the waiting times, star ratings or transport and parking arrangements.
- You may want to check with work, family and friends before booking your appointment.
- The hospital you choose for your first appointment will then be responsible for your care, including surgery and follow-up treatment if required.
- Once you have made your choice, the next step is to call your chosen hospital or local service to book your appointment.

Booking your appointment

- The telephone number for your chosen hospital or local service will be on the Appointment Request form.
- You will need your password and 'Unique Booking Reference Number' ready when you book or change your appointment.
- Your chosen hospital or local service will offer you a choice of date and time for your appointment.

There are three simple steps for choosing and booking your hospital appointment:

Step 1

Your GP decides you need to be referred to a specialist and gives you an Appointment Request form, which lists the choices available to you.

Step 2

Choose one from the list of hospitals or local services on the Appointment Request form

Call 0845 608 8888 or visit www.nhs.uk for more information to help you to make your choice.

Step 3

Phone your chosen hospital or local service to book your appointment

Make sure you have your password and Unique Booking Reference Number handy.

About Choose and Book – Frequently Asked Questions

How secure is the new service?

For Choose and Book to work, your personal details – such as name, address, date of birth and a note about you, and why you have been referred – will be held on computer and sent to your chosen hospital or local service. (Many GP practices already store your patient information on computer). Booking information will be held and sent securely; it will only be seen by those involved in booking your appointment and caring for you at the place where you are booked.

Whether it is on paper or computer, everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

How do I change my appointment?

When your appointment is booked, the hospital or local service will send you a confirmation letter. To change the appointment you will need to call the hospital or local service.

Can someone else book my appointment for me?

Yes, you will need to be with them when they make the telephone call and they will need to have your Appointment Request form. You will also need to tell them your password and be on hand to answer any queries that the hospital or local service may have.

What are the next steps for Choose and Book?

As hospital computer systems are upgraded around the country, it will in the future be possible to book hospital appointments at GP practices, on the internet, or by calling the Choose and Book Appointments Line.

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This leaflet can also be provided in braille and large print and is available on audio cassette and in other languages on request. Please call the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 08000 151 548.