

A Guide to Online Doctor Consultations

Health Compare provides key details of leading online doctor organisations in England; including each provider's ability to refer, either privately or to the NHS, user ratings, care quality rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and any details regarding geographical restrictions.

You can use the search criteria we provide to sort according to your preferences, including Trustpilot score, headline pricing, CQC rating and whether or not the provider is able to make an NHS, private referral, or both. Choose well.

If you urgently need a GP appointment and are finding it difficult to book a face to face appointment through your own practice, you should consider contacting an online doctor.

Online vs Face to Face

The term 'online' or 'virtual' doctor relates to the fact that the appointment is not face to face; the GP you speak to will be a real, qualified practitioner who is trained to give you the best advice and care, even over a phone or video call. The concept behind online doctors is that even if you're unable to attend a face to face consultation, you can still see a GP and from the comfort of your own home or from whatever location is most suitable for you.

Understanding Costs

Providers often work in slightly different ways, so it's important to ensure that you understand what is likely to happen when you create an account to book your appointment. They

also can have different fee structures, some charge separately for each individual action (writing a referral, issuing a fit note, or writing a prescription for example) some include these in the main cost.

Geographic Restrictions

You should also note that some online doctor providers will only allow you to register with them if you are within a certain distance or travel time from a particular physical location; this is so that if they can't complete the consultation over the phone/video call, you can visit one of their practices to have a physical examination. Where this is the case, we've added a note to the record called "geographic restrictions".

Online Doctor Registration

Whilst the vast majority don't, there are a couple of online doctor providers that require you to register exclusively with them as your NHS GP; this is entirely your choice. If you prefer to remain registered with your current GP and use an online doctor as an optional extra, then it's best to choose a different provider.