

Patient Frequently Asked Questions

Group Consultations (Face-to-Face)

Q: What are Group Consultations and what are the benefits?

A: Group Consultations are a way for you to connect with your healthcare team (doctor, nurse, pharmacist etc), and other people who live with the same health condition as you. These consultations are run as group sessions to allow you to spend more time with your healthcare team and discuss the things that matter to you. The group are then able to support each other and share ideas on keeping well. You will also receive personalised clinical and lifestyle care from your clinician.

They are a great way for you to receive routine care, annual reviews, and reassurance, at your practice or hospital. People who have attended Group Consultations tell us they really enjoy them and that they feel more confident to manage their health and keep well, as well as being able to get support and advice from other patients in how they are managing their condition.

Q: Can I get my regular health checks in a Group Consultation?

A: Yes, many practices are now offering the choice of having your yearly health check or review in a 90-minute Group Consultation rather than a rushed shorter or telephone appointment. This gives you more time to share what matters to you and any challenges you may have.

Q: What happens in a Group Consultation session?

A: You will be welcomed by a member of your GP practice team who will welcome you to the session and checked that you have completed your confidentiality form. The Group Consultations facilitator will then start the session and explain how the session will run. Each member of the group will then introduce themselves. The facilitator will then share with you any updated results relevant to your condition e.g. blood pressure, blood test results etc and ask what questions you have around these or anything else relating to your condition. The clinician will then join the session and cover any common themes or queries with the group before checking-in with each patient individually. Once the clinical session has ended the facilitator will then bring the session to an end and signpost you to any additional support or resources.

Q: How can I protect my privacy in Group Consultations

A: All participants are asked to sign a Group Consultations Confidentiality agreement before they take part in a Virtual Group Consultation. This states that they agree not to share any information discussed within the group. This confidentiality agreement is set out at the beginning of the session and repeated throughout the group session to ensure everyone understands.

You will be asked to share some relevant information about your condition that will be shared with the group in the form of a results /discussion board. For example, in a diabetes group this might include your blood glucose levels, blood pressure and other relevant tests.

Q: What happens if I change my mind when I'm in a Group Consultation?

A: Don't worry if this happens just let the facilitator know and you can leave the session at any time and book an alternative appointment later on.

Q: What happens if I need to have any blood tests or checks before I join a Group Consultation?

A: The practice or hospital will write to you before your Virtual Group Consultation to let you know if you need to have any particular tests before the session. It is useful to bring with you any home recordings of weight, blood pressure and blood sugar readings you may have.

Q: Can my carer, partner or friend join me in my Group Consultation?

A: Yes, with your agreement. It is often very useful for carers or family members to join in. Please note however that they will also need to agree to confidentiality just like other participants.