



DementiaUK
Helping families face dementia

Online GP services for people with dementia



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When you care for someone with dementia, you are likely to need to help them manage appointments, prescriptions and other services with their GP, particularly if they have other health conditions and/or are taking medication.

Many GPs offer online services where you can use your computer, tablet or smartphone to manage your own healthcare and that of the person you care for. You can access these services 24 hours a day.

We have produced this leaflet in association with the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) to explain what online services may be available, the benefits they might have for you and the person you care for, and how to access them.

Using online GP services

Online GP services can allow you to:

- book, change or cancel GP appointments without having to phone the practice. You can see if any appointments are free in

the coming days, and choose to see a particular doctor or nurse

- request repeat prescriptions. You can also see a list of your regular medications, the prescribed dose, and when your next prescription is due
- look up test results and monitor your health by comparing new and past results
- see an abridged version of the medical notes on file about you, such as your diagnoses, any allergies, immunisations, and past surgery
- see your medical notes wherever you are. This can be useful if you require medical attention when you are on holiday or away from home
- have a remote consultation with a GP by phone or video call

Using online GP services on behalf of a person with dementia

If you care for someone with dementia, using online GP services could help you manage their appointments and repeat

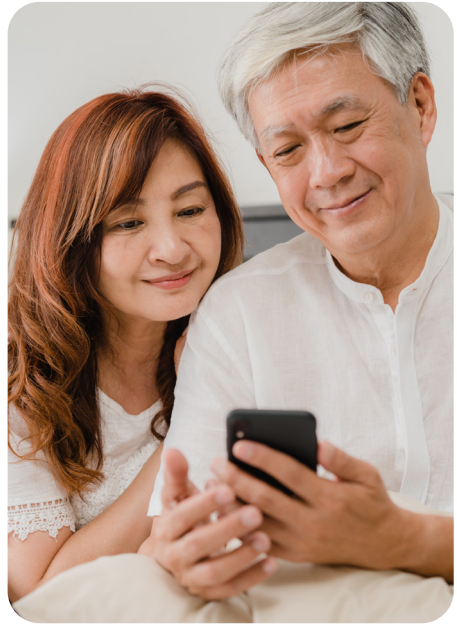
prescriptions. They can also act as a record of the appointments, prescriptions and test results that the person has had previously.

To set up an online GP account for the person you care for, or to access an online account that they already have, you must be named a ‘trusted person’ by the person and their GP. Your GP might refer to this as ‘proxy access’.

To set up proxy access or be named as a trusted person, you will need the person’s consent.

To be able to consent to you becoming a trusted person or receiving proxy access, the person with dementia must be deemed to have the capacity to do so under the Mental Capacity Act. A person is considered to have capacity if they can:

- understand the information relevant to the decision
- retain that information for long enough to make a decision
- use or weigh up that information as part of the decision-making process



The GP can guide you as to whether the person you care for has capacity. You can also read our leaflet on capacity and decision-making – see Sources of support on p6 for details.

Dementia is a progressive condition, so a person with the diagnosis is likely to get to a stage where they no longer have capacity to make some decisions. In this situation, it might be possible for the GP to name you as a trusted person without the person’s consent.

How to apply to become a trusted person

To appoint you as a trusted person, the person with dementia will be asked to fill in a form from their GP surgery.

The form has three important parts:

- part one names the trusted person
- part two states which online services the trusted person will have access to – appointments, prescriptions and/or GP records. You can be given access to one, two, or all three of these. The GP can advise you on which will be most useful in your situation
- part three is for the person with dementia to sign, to confirm that they want you to have access to their online GP services, now or in the future. You can help them fill in the other parts of the form, but they must sign it themselves. If they are unable to sign the form, please speak to the GP or practice manager for advice

You will then need to visit the GP along with the person with dementia. You will both need photographic ID such as a passport or driving licence. If you or the person with dementia do not have either of these forms of ID, there are other ways to prove your identity. The GP practice can advise you about this.

The GP may ask to see the person with dementia alone before giving you online access as a trusted person. They may wish to ask whether there is any information in their medical file that they would like to be kept private. The GP can decide not to give you access to any or all of the person's online services if they feel it is not in their best interests.

The decision on whether to appoint you as a trusted person may take around two weeks, depending on how busy the GP is – the practice should be able to indicate the timescale. It may be possible to make the decision more quickly if the need is urgent. If this is the case, ask to speak to the GP.



Access to online services with a lasting power of attorney

A lasting power of attorney (LPA) is a legal document that appoints a person (or persons) to make decisions on someone's behalf if they are unable to do so. There are two types of LPA: one for health and welfare, and another for property and financial affairs. See Sources of support on p6 for details of our leaflet on lasting power of attorney.

If the person you care for still has capacity but hasn't made an LPA nominating you as their attorney, you should encourage them to do so as soon as possible. As well as supporting your application to become a trusted person, it will

allow you to make other important decisions in the person's best interests if they become unable to make these decisions themselves.

Being named as an attorney for health and welfare is not a guarantee that the GP will nominate you as a trusted person, so it is a good idea to talk to them about this as early as possible, preferably while the person with dementia has capacity to consent.

It is also helpful if you are registered as a carer with your own GP practice. They will have a carer registration form for you to complete. See Sources of support on p7 for details of our leaflet on the importance of registering as a carer with your GP.



Sources of support

If you would like to speak to a dementia specialist Admiral Nurse about using online GP services or any other aspect of dementia, call our free Helpline on **0800 888 6678** (Monday–Friday 9am–9pm, Saturday and Sunday 9am–5pm, every day except 25th December) or email helpline@dementiauk.org

If you prefer, you can pre-book a phone or video call appointment with an Admiral Nurse: visit dementiauk.org/closer-to-home

Dementia UK information

Capacity and decision-making
dementiauk.org/capacity-decision-making

Lasting power of attorney
dementiauk.org/get-support/legal-and-financial-information/lasting-power-of-attorney

Getting the best out of GP and other health appointments
dementiauk.org/the-best-from-gp-appointments

Getting the best out of a remote consultation
dementiauk.org/remote-consultation

The importance of registering as a carer with your GP
dementiauk.org/registering-as-a-carer-with-gp

Other resources

NHS information: using online services
nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/using-online-services

Learn My Way: improving your health online
learnmyway.com/subjects/improving-your-health-online



The information in this booklet is written and reviewed by dementia specialist Admiral Nurses.

We are always looking to improve our resources, to provide the most relevant support for families living with dementia. If you have feedback about any of our leaflets, please email feedback@dementiauk.org

We receive no government funding and rely on voluntary donations, including gifts in Wills.

For more information on how to support Dementia UK, please visit dementiauk.org/donate or call **0300 365 5500**.
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If you're caring for someone with dementia or if you have any other concerns or questions, call or email our Admiral Nurses for specialist support and advice.

Call **0800 888 6678** or email helpline@dementiauk.org

Open Monday-Friday, 9am-9pm
Saturday and Sunday, 9am-5pm



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