

# Hospital Video Appointments



They're taking away the option to go to the hospital and see a doctor face to face



Definitely not! The video appointments are an extra service. We hope they will mean people can get seen quicker. Some people might also prefer them to going to hospitals in handcuffs with prison officers. Hospital appointments will still be available. That option will not be taken away.

It's all about saving money



There are lots of reasons for trying out video appointments. The main one is to improve access and quality of hospital care. They might be cheaper, but we won't be sure until we have tried them out for a while. If they are cheaper then savings can be re-invested in the NHS.

The prison will record my conversation and spy on me



No this will not happen. One of the fundamental agreed principles of the system is that no consultation will be recorded. HMPPS insists on this as well as the NHS.

If I say I don't want a video appointment it will be used against me



Video appointments are optional. No-one should ever force you to have one, or threaten you if you choose not to have one. If you ever feel like this has happened then speak to your prisoner healthcare representative. They have been told about the video appointments and can raise concerns about them with health councils.

## I can't change my mind once I've said I'll have a video appointment



You can always change your mind about having a video appointment.

## The prison healthcare staff might speak to the doctor before I arrive and turn them against me



The prison healthcare staff will always dial into the call, and hang up the call, when you are in the room. That way you will know they haven't talked about you without you there.

## There is no way the doctor can treat me properly over the internet



The doctors at the hospital will take a lot of time to consider what appointments they can and can't offer over video link. They will never offer you an appointment if they are worried they won't be able to treat you remotely. If they see you by video but decide they actually want to see you in person, then they will tell you and get you booked in for escort by the healthcare team at the prison.

## I heard the prison healthcare staff try and help with examinations in the video appointments – they're not trained to do this



The doctors at the hospital will only let prison healthcare staff make examinations when they have been trained to do so. In many cases the hospital doctors will have come in to give the prison healthcare staff special training so they can help with the video appointments. If you're not sure you can ask the hospital doctor during the appointment.

## There is no benefit for me in having a video appointment



We think video appointments will benefit some people. We hope people will get seen quicker because they don't have to wait for an escort to hospital. We hope it will be a better experience for people that don't like going to hospitals in handcuffs.

You will also be able to know the time and date of your video appointment. We hope this will reduce stress for people and allow them to prepare for their appointment.

We hope that by allowing the hospital and prison healthcare staff to discuss your treatment with you, it will mean that anything the hospital prescribes will be allowed by the prison regime.

We hope that video appointments will also improve confidentiality, as you won't have prison officers there.

As with all new things we can't be sure of these answers yet. This is why we are doing some research on the video appointments while they are being rolled out. You might be asked to take part in this and offer your views. This research is independent of the prison.

## The video equipment will be rubbish



It has taken a while to get the equipment set up in the prison to have a video appointment for healthcare. We have tested it and believe it is working well. On the day you will get a chance to feedback on whether you thought it was good enough for an appointment or not. If people think it isn't good enough then we will work out how to improve it.

## Video appointments would never be offered to patients in the community



Most hospitals are now trying to introduce video appointments for community patients as well. This is actually harder to do as people in the community will have to use their own phones or computers for appointments, which may not work very well. Video appointments in prisons also have the added bonus of having a healthcare staff member with you while you have your appointment. This wouldn't happen in the community. Hopefully it means they can help you understand things at the end of the appointment, and can help with any extra examinations the hospital doctor needs to do during the appointment.

## We have heard about Brexit. We know NHS services might get privatised. Who says America won't take over our video appointments?



There are already lots of private healthcare providers who deliver healthcare in prisons in England. However, this doesn't mean they can ignore NHS rules. No matter what happens with Brexit, healthcare providers in prisons will have to obey NHS rules.

## I had a video appointment but the doctor said they actually need to see me in person. Does this mean I'm really sick?



If a hospital doctor asks to see you in person then they should tell you why. If they don't then you can ask them. It might be because they are worried about you, but it could also be because they aren't sure if they can give a proper diagnosis by video. They should always be open and honest with you about the reason.

## Only Consultants can offer appointments over the video system



Appointments can be delivered over video by any trained health care clinician, it doesn't have to be a Consultant.

## You said the appointments are only 15 minutes long. Does that mean I could get rushed off if I'm upset?



No, definitely not. As with any face to face appointment, if you need time to ask questions then the hospital doctor will be happy to answer them.

## If the video system breaks down on the day I'll take forever to get an appointment re-booked.



If you can't have your video appointment on the day, for whatever reason, the prison will try and book you in to the next video clinic. This should only mean a wait of a week or two, unlike the long waits to go off-site to the hospital.

## The system will never be used for mental health appointments, only physical health.



At the moment we are starting off slowly. We are delivering physical health appointments as these hospital departments were really keen to try out video calls. Once we get used to the video system we will try and get more types of appointments available. We plan to see if we can use it for mental health appointments.

## Hospital staff will get annoyed with us if we don't turn up because of lockdowns or other problems getting to prison healthcare for our appointment.



No, definitely not. The hospital staff involved in setting up the hospital appointments all understand there can be issues with the prison regime. They understand these things are out of your control.

## OTHER QUESTIONS

### Can I see the same doctor I saw face to face at the hospital?

If the doctor has signed up to provide video appointments then you might do, however we can't guarantee it at the moment.

### If I don't like the doctor who's doing the video appointments can I ask for a different one?

You can tell the healthcare team at the prison if you don't like the doctor you saw for your video appointment. However, just with normal face to face appointments at the hospital, it might not be possible to pick a different doctor