

Patient Advice and Liaison Service

What do PALS do?

Each Health Trust in England has a PALS service to offer emotional and confidential support to the public when they need help in using health and related social care services.

The service is confidential your name will not be passed to anyone without your permission.

TORBAY

Free Phone: 0800 032 7657

Telephone: 01803 219700

Email: pals.torbaycaretrust@nhs.net

Post: PALS Manager
Torbay Care Trust
Customer Service Centre
Union House
Torquay TQ1 3YA

Monday to Friday between 8am - 6pm.

DEVON

Telephone: 0845 111 0080 or 01392 385694

Email: pals.devonpct@nhs.net

Post: PALS Office Devon PCT
St. Edmund's Court
16 Okehampton Street
Exeter EX4 1DU

Monday to Friday between 9am - 5pm.

Contacts

If your GP needs you to see a specialist, you can now choose to go to any hospital in England, including many private and independent sector hospitals that meet NHS standards.

You can choose the hospital with the best reputation, or shortest waiting times, or simply the one that is most convenient for you.

If you need help or support in making your appointment or even choice of hospital, you can call the local Patient Choice Helpline on: **tel 01626 883888**

For more information about NHS Choices and how to compare hospitals please ask your GP practice or visit NHS Choices website: **www.nhs.uk/choices**



I need to plan my outpatient appointments around my children.



If you would like this leaflet in a different format such as large print, Braille or audio tape, or in a different language, please contact the Patient Choice Helpline on 01626 883888

The NHS logo, consisting of the letters 'NHS' in white on a blue rectangular background.

It's your choice

Are you ready, willing and able?

Help us treat you without delay.

This leaflet helps you to prepare for your outpatient appointment. It tells you what you can expect from your local NHS and how you can help to keep your care as prompt and safe as possible.

Choosing your own hospital.

Is that too much to ask?

We don't think so.



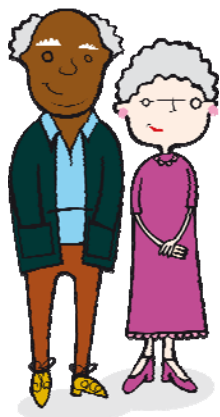
Part of the NHS Referral to Treatment Programme

What can you expect from your local NHS?

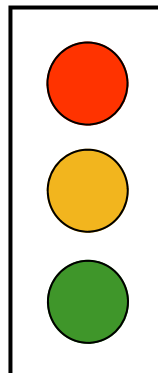
Waiting for treatment or an operation can be an anxious time. You may have discomfort or need to rely on friends and family for support, however, you can expect your local NHS to provide care and treatment promptly.

In the early 1990s waits of over six months for your first outpatient appointment were not uncommon. From April 2011 there will be more choice available to you and you be advised by your GP on what this means for your treatment.

Wherever possible you will wait less than 18 weeks for your treatment or operation. There may be circumstances or times when you may choose to wait longer for your care, or it may not be clinically appropriate to proceed at this time. You can help us to ensure you get treated quicker. Are you:



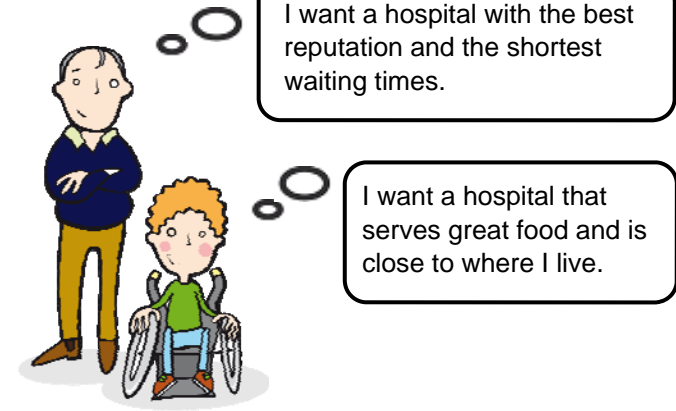
Ready
Willing
and Able



Think and plan ahead

- Have you considered family commitments and ensure you have spoken to your carers or whoever will assist you?
- Make sure your personal details are accurate in all your care records, this includes your current address, telephone number, mobile number and other contact information.
- Talk to your GP or healthcare professional about your treatment so that you understand what to expect and when.
- Discuss your choice options with your GP and book your appointment.

- Remember you have a choice of hospital. Please be aware you are able to consider a hospital or healthcare provider other than your local one.
- Keep the appointments you have chosen. If you find you are unable to attend, perhaps because of illness or family circumstances, please contact the hospital or your health care provider as soon as possible.
- If you do not attend your chosen appointment it could end up delaying your care.
- Rearrange your appointments as early as possible if you realise you cannot attend.



- Look after yourself ahead of your appointment so that you are well enough to be treated.
- Think about how you may improve your lifestyle, for example by stopping smoking or losing weight.
- If you have a long-term condition such as asthma or diabetes please take care to ensure it is well managed.
- Ensure travel arrangements or any plans for visiting are in place.

Following this basic guide will help us to reduce the number of hospital visits you must make and enable earlier diagnosis, treatment and care.

It's
your
choice

www.nhs.uk/choices