



Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru  
Older People's Commissioner for Wales

# GP Practices in Wales: A guide to your rights



# Know your rights

**Our rights can help us in lots of everyday situations, including in our GP practice.**

Knowing about our rights can help us understand the services that should be available, the things we are entitled to, and the support and adjustments that should be offered if we need them.

So it's useful to remember that if you live in Wales, you have a right to:

- Be registered with a GP practice.
- Have a new patient appointment within six months of registration.
- Access your practice in person, by telephone and online during opening hours.
- An appointment on the same day if a clinician decides your need is urgent.
- State a preference for seeing a particular healthcare professional.
- Free prescriptions from a pharmacist in Wales (if you are registered with a GP in Wales).
- Access your practice's information and services in a way that suits you.
- Access your personal health information, or in certain circumstances the health record of a deceased person.
- Any information you give your practice being treated in confidence.
- An information leaflet setting out the range of services your practice provides.
- Information on how to get help and advice.
- Welsh language versions of any documents provided by the Health Board
- Move your registration to another practice.

# Providing services for patients

As well as knowing about our rights, it's also useful to know about the things that GP practices in Wales must do when providing services for patients.

GP practices in Wales must:

- Provide services for people who have health conditions from which they are expected to recover, chronic disease management and general management of terminally ill patients.
- Provide services at times that are appropriate to meet the reasonable needs of patients.
- Ensure that people can access GP services effectively offline and online.
- Ensure that patients can access services throughout core hours in an emergency.
- Have their 'main premises' doors open and staff on site between 8.30am and 6.00pm
- Provide a recorded greeting in English and Welsh on the telephone.
- Tell you if there is a charge for a service.
- Consider people's experiences of accessing and using their services and take proportionate action to address any equality issues.
- Capture, record, highlight and share your communication needs if you are living with sensory loss.
- Ensure that any new signs and notices about NHS services are bilingual; in English and Welsh.

## Good practice

In addition, there are other things that GP practices should be doing to help ensure people can access the services and support they may need.

This good practice includes:

- Offering a mixture of remote (telephone or video), face to face, urgent, on the day and pre-bookable appointments, determined by the practice in discussion with patients.
- Treating an online request in the same way as a telephone request.
- Offering you an appropriate consultation when you first contact your practice, based on an assessment of your clinical need.
- Providing a telephone service that fully meets patients' needs.
- Considering your experience of accessing them online and by telephone.
- Asking your preferred language and making a record of it.
- Recording the fact that you are caring for someone else.

## Find out more

The Commissioner has published a more detailed guide - ***GP Practices In Wales: A Guide for Older People*** - which provides information about everything from registering with a practice, to making and attending an appointment, to the different staff roles now common in GP practices.

If you would like a copy of the guide, please call 03442 640 670.

You can also download the guide from the Commissioner's website:

[olderpeople.wales](http://olderpeople.wales).

# Useful contacts

If you are concerned that your GP practice is not treating you fairly or providing the right services and support to meet your needs and uphold your rights, you may wish to raise this directly with your GP practice or health board.

Contact details for other organisations that can provide information and support are also included below:

## NHS 111

Dial 111 on the telephone [111.wales.nhs.uk](https://111.wales.nhs.uk)

## Llais

02920 235 558 [llaiswales.org](https://llaiswales.org)

## Equality Advisory and Support Service

0808 800 0082 [equalityadvisoryservice.com](https://equalityadvisoryservice.com)

## Older People's Commissioner for Wales Advice and Assistance Service

03442 640 670 [olderpeople.wales](https://olderpeople.wales)

**[www.olderpeople.wales](http://www.olderpeople.wales)**



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