

Welcome to Our Patient Charter

At Wandsworth Medical Centre, we are committed to delivering safe, respectful, and high-quality healthcare to all our patients.

Our Patient Charter sets out the standards of care you can expect from us, and the responsibilities we ask you to uphold in return. The charter also encourages you to share feedback and contribute to the ongoing improvement of patient care.

By working together in partnership - built on mutual respect, clear communication, and shared responsibility - we can ensure the best possible health outcomes and experiences for all.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PATIENTS

OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR PATIENTS

Registration



You can register with our surgery if you live within our catchment area.

If you live outside the catchment area, you may be able to register with us. However, please be aware that we will not be able to see you at home and you will not be able to access certain community services if you do not live locally.

If you move outside the catchment area, you can continue to use our services. Please find a local GP as soon as you can.

If we feel that we are unable to provide adequate care due to your location, we will ask you to register with a new GP closer to your new address.

When registering a child, we require at least one parent, or guardian must also be registered with us. This is part of our safeguarding policy.

When and how to contact us



We are open from 8.00am to 6.30pm, Mondays to Fridays. To contact us or to request an appointment you can:

- Call us.
- Use the practice website.
- Use the NHS App.
- Visit the practice.

We operate a triage system. This means that whether you make your request on-line, by phone, or by visiting the practice, you will be asked to give certain details needed to assess your request.

We will assess your request within one working day and respond with:

- A text message responding to your query.
- Advice to go to a pharmacy or to use another NHS service.
- A phone call that day or a subsequent day.
- An offer of an appointment that day or a subsequent day. The appointment could be with a GP or other member of the practice staff, like a nurse, physiotherapist or pharmacist.

If you are unable to submit requests online, you can call or visit our reception who will submit the request on your behalf

You can ask to see a preferred healthcare professional, and we will try to meet your request. You might have to wait longer for that person to be available.

Our doctors will decide what is best for you based on your clinical need. At times this may differ from your expectation. Please accept the outcome offered to you, as this was based on the doctor's clinical decision. We ask you not to argue with the receptionist if you do not agree with the decision.

Please do not send in multiple requests in one day about the same issue or follow up with a call to ask if we have received your query. Always wait for a response from our team.

You can use the NHS App to book or cancel appointments, order repeat prescriptions, and see your test results online. Please turn on notifications within the APP so that the practice can contact you more easily.

Do tell us if you change your contact telephone number or email. Our reception team spends a lot of unnecessary time trying to contact you if your details are not up to date.

If you request an appointment, we will offer you the next available slot. At times you may have to wait. We do not have unlimited capacity, and if we are fully booked on the date you have requested, we will be unable to create appointment availability for you. We are however happy to place you on our waiting list.

If you have contacted us, please keep an eye out for our calls or messages so that we can reach you.

Please let us know if you require additional assistance with digital communication. There are resources within our local Borough who we can signpost you to who can help you navigate computer technology.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PATIENTS

OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR PATIENTS

What to do if the practice is closed?



If you need help for your physical or mental health outside of our core hours, and you cannot wait until we open again, please use out of hours providers.

When we are closed, please call 111 or go online to 111.nhs.uk. They will tell you what to do next.

Do not contact the Surgery for Emergencies.

If your condition is serious or life-threatening, go straight to A&E (Accident and Emergency) or call 999.

Appointments



We provide many types of appointments.

Please be aware that:

- Doctor telephone appointments are 10- minute duration.
- Doctor face-to-face appointments are 10- minute duration.
- Most nurse appointments are 15 minutes in duration.

We understand that travel plans may coincide with health needs, however, please note that Wandsworth Medical Centre cannot offer medical advice, telephone consultations, or remote treatment to patients who are outside the UK, even if the request relates to ongoing care or management.

While we aim to honour all scheduled appointments, there may be occasions when unforeseen staff absences (such as illness) lead to cancellations or changes. This may also affect the availability of your preferred GP. In such cases, we will do our best to offer you an alternative appointment with another clinician and accommodate your needs as soon as possible.

Please be aware of the 10-minute timeframe and book another appointment if you have outstanding queries at the end of your consultation. If you take up more of the Doctors time, the next patient will be kept waiting.

Please prepare for your appointment:

- Be on time: If you arrive late for your appointment, we may not be able to see you. Being late for an appointment or being unavailable for a timed call-back can affect other patients.
- Cancel if needed: Appointments are valuable. If you can't go to your appointment, tell the practice as soon as you can, so that they can offer it to someone else.
- If you fail to attend your appointment, we will send you a warning letter and you will be at risk of removal from the practice.
- Do not book appointments if you will be abroad at the time of the consultation.
- Inform reception if you are temporarily overseas so we can advise appropriately.

We ask for your understanding and flexibility during unforeseen staff absences. We always try our best to offer a suitable alternative solution.

Chaperone



We can arrange a chaperone if needed for your appointment.

Please ask our receptionist or the clinician if you require a chaperone at your appointment.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PATIENTS

OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR PATIENTS

Interpreters



If you do not speak English, we can arrange interpreting services for your consultation in your preferred language.

Please make reception aware if you need an interpreter for your appointment.

Please ask for interpretation services when you make an appointment.

Home visits



We offer Home Visits to patients who are truly housebound and are too frail to attend or to be brought to the surgery.

We are unable to offer Home Visits to patients who live more than a walk away from the surgery.

Please come to the Surgery wherever it is possible, home visits are very time consuming, and we are able to offer more appointments if we see you in the surgery.

Please Request home visits before 10 am when possible.

Waiting times



At the surgery we aspire to see all patients within 15 minutes of the booked appointment time.

We will tell you if your waiting time in person is likely to be more than 30 minutes.

If your GP is running late it will be because the GP is dealing with an emergency or another patient has needed more time than was allocated with the GP during the appointment.

For telephone appointments, we will contact you within 2 hours of the time slot.

To help your GP keep to appointment times please:

- Do your best to be punctual for your appointments.
- Keep to your 10-minute time slot so that you don't keep the next patient waiting.
- Please be patient if the clinician is running late; it maybe you who needs more time in future.
- Do you best to answer your phone for telephone appointments or when you have asked us to contact you. Missing several calls may result in you having to re-submit another appointment request.

Your treatment plan



Your clinician will discuss to your treatment plan with you. They will ensure you understand the diagnosis and treatment choices. They will advise if any tests are needed and how to follow up the results.

Our clinicians will be understanding if you wish to seek a second opinion.

Once you agree to your care plan with your clinician, we will ask you to follow it. If you have concerns or if your agreed care plan is not working, please discuss this with your clinician.

Please complete any investigations (i.e. blood test) that the clinician suggests in a timely manner.

Do book follow up or review appointment if this was requested by your GP.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PATIENTS

OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR PATIENTS

Test results



Test results will be available to view in your NHS app once they are available.

If your GP has referred you for blood tests or scans, then we will discuss the results with you once we receive them.

We will generally advise you on any test results via text and offer a follow-up appointment if it is indicated.

If you see that your results are normal, but you suffer ongoing symptoms or concerns, please arrange an appointment to discuss this with your GP.

Please don't contact us to ask for your results, wait until you see the results on your NHS APP.

Please wait at least 7 days for your test results to appear in the NHS App. Only contact us sooner if your symptoms are deteriorating.

We will contact you if the clinician has reviewed your results and wants to discuss them with you. This will usually be via text message with a request to book an appointment.

If your tests were requested by a hospital specialist, or private clinic, please contact them directly for your results.

Prescriptions



You will receive an NHS prescription for medication that is available on the NHS.

We will offer you regular medication reviews, so your medications remain safe and effective. Some medications cannot be issued without a clinical review due to safety requirements.

Repeat prescriptions will be dealt with within two working days after request.

Some medications, such as controlled drugs, can only be issued in small amounts and not on a repeat prescription.

We are unable to take medication requests over the phone, they must be requested in writing.

Wandsworth Medical Centre cannot offer remote treatment to patients who are outside the UK, even if the request relates to ongoing care or management.

We will review shared care prescribing requested by an NHS Consultant, but if the GP feels that this is outside of their scope of practice, they may ask the hospital consultant to continue the prescribing.

Wandsworth Medical Centre will consider requests to undertake shared care prescribing with private providers, however, we can only accept these if they meet NHS criteria.

Please sign up to use the NHS app for repeat medication requests.

Please order repeat medicines on time, so that you don't run out.

Plan for medication reviews or follow-ups before travelling.

Remember to keep your nominated pharmacy up to date.

Please attend medication reviews when requested.

Please be understanding if you are advised that an urgent prescription request needs time to be processed. Prescription safety is vital to us, and clinical staff need time to review your medical records before they issue a medication. If your GP is busy consulting with patients, they cannot leave the consultation to sign a prescription for you.

If you are given a prescription at the hospital (NHS or private) you must take it to the hospital pharmacy and not bring it to the GP surgery- we cannot process this for you on the day.

If your medication is on 'consultant shared care', and you do not attend follow-up appointments and blood test monitoring, then please understand that our GP may stop prescribing and refer you back to the hospital specialist for the prescribing.

If you have been to see a private doctor, they will issue a private prescription, and the patient will be responsible for the cost for the medication. Please do NOT assume that the GP will prescribe this for you.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PATIENTS

OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR PATIENTS

NHS Referrals



Urgent referrals will be completed in 24 hours; routine referrals may take longer.

In most cases you have the right to choose the hospital or service you'd like to go to. You can get further information on your right to choose on the [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) website.

Please use your NHS App to see your hospital appointments and results. We do not have access to this information.

Once referred, contact the hospital directly with any queries regarding appointments or treatment.

Tell the hospital if you can't attend your appointment, or if you move house or changed your telephone number.

Please request any correspondence relating to your hospital visit and outcomes from the hospital clinic, not from your surgery.

Results of tests and scans organised by the hospital clinicians will not be returned to the GP. Please request and discuss the results with the hospital clinician who requested these.

We are unable to arrange an earlier hospital appointment for you. If you are unhappy with your waiting times, please contact the hospital directly to raise your concern.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PATIENTS

OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR PATIENTS

Private Referrals



The surgery can provide private referral letters if the GP agrees that the referral is indicated.

We will not charge for private referral letters however we may charge a non-NHS fee for any forms that a private medical insurance company asks us to complete for a private referral, health insurance or travel claim.

Please liaise with your private health insurance company to seek a private medical opinion. Many private insurance companies do not need GP referral letters or can offer you a consultation with a private GP to facilitate a referral.

It is the patient's responsibility to obtain insurance authorisation and to make the appointment with a provider of their choice.

If the consultant thinks that the patient needs any tests, then the consultant is responsible for:

- Arranging the test.
- Giving the patients their results and explaining what they mean.
- The patient should not contact the practice to discuss the results of these tests.

If the consultant thinks that the patient needs medication, then the consultant is responsible for:

- Giving the first prescription for the medication to the patient.
- They may need to continue prescribing until the condition is stabilised.

The patient will be responsible for the cost for the medication and associated monitoring.

Patients should NOT assume that the GP will prescribe this for them.

In some cases, a GP may be able to take over a private prescription for ongoing treatment. To assess such a prescription request, we need to see a letter from the consultant. The letter must:

- Outline the reasons for treatment.
- Explain the precise details of the prescription.
- Explain what condition the medication is being used to treat.
- How long the treatment is intended for.

What, if any, monitoring or follow up is required.

In some cases, we may not be able to issue the patient with an NHS prescription however, patients can still obtain the medication recommended via a private prescription from the consultant.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PATIENTS

OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR PATIENTS

Vaccinations



We provide and support NHS childhood immunisations.

We provide and support NHS travel vaccinations. Not all travel vaccinations and treatments are available on the NHS, please consult a travel clinic for these.

Positive engagement with immunisation programmes helps us provide preventative care and protects the wider community.

We expect you to participate when invited and keep your records up to date (even if you decide not to participate).

Medical Records and Confidentiality



We will keep your records and information confidential.

We will only disclose your information to other professionals for purposes related to your health care.

We will only disclose your information to people or agencies if you have consented to this.

Please be aware that it is possible to be overheard at the front desk. If you wish to discuss a private matter with our reception staff in a more confidential space, we can arrange this for you.

Your medical records are available to view via the NHS App. If you need a copy, please download this form from the App. We won't routinely print or email items of your medical records to you if you can obtain this information via the NHS App. You can request to have complete copies of medical records under a subject access request (SAR), which takes four weeks to process.

If your relatives, friends, or carers ask us for information about your health care, we can only speak to them with your consent.

You can attend with a relative or carer if you wish for them to be informed about your care.

You can ask us to add consent to your records if you want a named person to access your information.

Non-NHS Services



Not all services are funded by the NHS. Non-NHS services will attract a fee which will be payable to the surgery.

Our staff will advise you if a service, form or letter requested is not covered by the NHS terms and services.

We will advise you in advance of any fees related to non-NHS services and will not action your request until you have consented to the fee.

The surgery only carries out limited non-NHS work, such as essential reports for life insurance. It may not always be possible for us to do the non-NHS work requested.

Any non-NHS work will need to be agreed before completion. Non-NHS fees will be payable in advance.

Please make sure that you have given consent to agencies or insurance companies that ask us to complete non-NHS reports.

Non-NHS forms and requests for your complete medical records (Subject Access Requests) take up to 28 days to process. These are done in the order we receive them. Please do not put pressure on our staff to expedite these timeframes.

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PATIENTS

OUR EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR PATIENTS

Support Letters



Wandsworth Medical Centre is an NHS practice, and we prioritise our work based on clinical need.

We support our patients in difficult times however are unable to issue support letters every time they are requested.

Support letters take a long time to write and do not usually make a difference to applications.

There are usually processes for patients to follow that do not require letters from the GP.

Please understand that GPs are inundated with requests to write letters of support. If your request is refused, please follow the advice we give to find an alternative solution.

Never book an appointment under a false presence and then ask for a letter once you are in consultation with a GP.

Support Letters are not funded by the NHS and there will be a fee payable to the surgery should the GP agree to write a letter for you.

Behaviour



We treat our patients with politeness, dignity, and respect.

Please treat staff with courtesy and respect.

Verbal or physical abuse of our staff will not be tolerated and will result in removal from our patient list.

We kindly ask patients to avoid persistent or unrealistic demands on our services. Such behaviour places undue pressure on staff and may prevent other patients from receiving timely care. If your requests are deemed excessive or disruptive, we will inform you and issue a formal warning. Should the behaviour continue and significantly impact our ability to deliver safe and effective care, we may ask you to register with another practice.

Feedback



We appreciate compliments and positive feedback; it is important for our staff to feel valued.

Should you be unhappy with an aspect of our service, please let us know. We investigate and respond to all complaints as per our complaint's procedure.

We are committed to patient involvement in the delivery of healthcare and can change the way we work with constructive feedback.

Give us feedback about our services

Please speak to the Practice Manager if you have a concern, rather than posting a poor review on Google.

Consider Joining the Patient Participation Group: This is a group of patients who can offer feedback on the services it delivers. The practice website explains how you can join.

If you want to change to a new surgery, you can do so at any point. Most people have a few choices nearby.

To find a new GP Practice you can call or visit a local practice, or

Find a GP Online:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp>