

How to email patients individual appointment self-book links

With many North West London general practices exceeding or being close to the SMS allocation of 30p per patient, it may be helpful to use email patients where possible. Here is information on how to send appointment self-booking links to patients via email:

TPP SystmOne:

You can select 'Send email' within 'Communications Annexe' when sending appointment self-booking links individually or in batch (e.g. via Reporting). SystmOne sends email using the practice's email address that is setup in SystmOne's Organisational Preferences, so the practice might also receive patient replies sent back to this address.

Optum EMIS:

No inbuilt functionality, so look at guidance for other products below.

Accurx:

Individual Self-Book messages from the desktop toolbar can currently be sent via email. This is a **self-book link for individual, new messages**. (currently this is not batch or replies).

If a patient tries to respond directly via email, they will receive an automated reply stating: 'Please DO NOT reply to this email address as it will NOT be delivered to your practice.'

PATCHs:

Information on Patchs messaging functionality can be found in these help articles. Sending and receiving messages via email is available across all message types.

[Individual Messaging](#) (link)

Email sending is available for individual messages either when reviewing and responding to a Patchs request or when the practice use Patchs to message a patient directly.

[Bulk Messaging](#) (link)

Email sending is available for practices to use when sending Bulk messages.

[Sending self-book links](#) (link)

Self book links can be sent to patients as email messages

[Messaging via the NHS App](#) (link)

Email is one of the available fallback methods when messaging via the NHS App.

eConsult:

Email replies to an eConsult are the default response option, and the default email address will be the email that the patient entered when they submitted their eConsult.

- practices can send email to a different address, simply by selecting Add new email and enter in the email address
- all emails responses can be saved directly into the patients record
- practices can create a template response for personal use or shared with team.
- You can add any of the following file types of attachment: .pdf, .docx, .jpg, .png, .jpeg, .rtf, .doc, or .txt
- if email fails, it will indicate in the smart inbox under failed message folder
- there is the ability to send a one way reply link to patients
- emails are sent from eConsult inbox not from the practice email address.

Benefits to sending communications via email:

- some patients prefer receiving communications via email rather than SMS, particularly if they don't have a smartphone or prefer viewing documents on their computer
- there is no word limit, so you can write longer messages to patient if you need to
- in Accurx it saves communications automatically to the patient record.

Disadvantages to sending communications via email:

- need to ensure email address are verified and efforts to keep them up-to-date
- patients might not check/respond to emails as much as they would to SMS
- may also need to consider alternative of sending via NHS App messaging as this starts to become more widely available.

If you have any questions about SMS or emailing patients, please do not hesitate to contact the NWL Digital Transformation and Delivery team on nhsnwl.digitalfirst@nhs.net