

From 18th September 2024, Western Road is moving to a Total Triage model, supported by Accurx. This will change how you reach your GP. Please see the following FAQs to explain all....

What is total triage?

Total Triage is a model of providing GP services where EVERY request to the practice is received and treated in exactly the same way. In our case, every request will be received in an online form, and every form will be seen by a GP.

Do the Department of Health/ NHS England and the local Integrated Care Board support the use of total triage?

Yes. They are actively requesting that all GP surgeries move to this model.

What is Accurx?

Accurx is a software platform that we have used since 2020 to text patients, ask for information from patients and use to help them book appointments. You may well have already used it to book a COVID or flu jab appointment or send photos into the surgery for example.

Accurx is being used for Total triage by 623 surgeries in England already and has been available for a number of years, so is already well tested.

When will the Total triage process start?

We will move to this model on Wednesday 18th September 2024, but until this date you can practice sending your requests to the GP using the same link to increase your confidence in using it by that time.

How do I get in touch?

Click the 'Send an online consultation' link which you will find on the front page of our website. This will guide you through some screens where you provide your information.

- Deciding whether your query is Medical or Administrative
- Confirming it is not an emergency (advising you what to do if it is)
- Answering 6 short questions about the problem or request.
- Filling in your Name, DOB, Post code and Phone number and deciding how you wish to be contacted.
- Checking the details and submitting the form.

What if I'm no good at technology or don't have access to it at the moment?

No problem, just call reception or pop in. They will fill in the form for you and send it over to the GP who will deal with it in exactly the same way as everyone else. You won't lose out.

I'm a relative, carer, care home staff, chemist etc?

You can submit on behalf of the patient. The form asks you whether you are submitting as the patient or on behalf of someone else. You can give whatever contact details are best. Thank you for helping our patients in this way. (See question below on keeping information safe).

What can I book with reception?

- Nurse appointments
- Prostag and Zoladex injections
- 8 week baby checks

These will still book through reception as previously. If you accidentally send a consultation we will just contact you and get this booked!

Can I do this through the NHS App?

Yes! And if you have the app it slightly speeds up the process. You will log in using your biometrics, or user name and password, which will pre-fill all the Demographics that the form needs. The option of filling in the form with NHS App is offered when you click 'Send an Online Consultation'.

See [Getting started with the NHS App - NHS App help and support - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) for more details about getting the App.

Can I submit photos?

Yes. There is a place to do this. Remember not to send any intimate photos especially of children.

Can I have a video consultation?

Technically yes, Accurx does support this. But usually the doctors would prefer to either speak to you on the phone or see you in person.

What happens to my consult after it's sent?

If it's an Admin consult, it will be seen by our reception and admin team.

If it's a medical consult, it will be seen by our triaging GP. This GP will review every consult that comes in.

What help might I receive?

Depends entirely on the situation. The GP might be able to give you advice to resolve the problem or provide a simple answer by text. They might refer you directly to a specialist or community service. They might ask you to get some investigations done before you see a GP in person. They might book you a phone call or face to face appointment. All the possible options for care you receive now will still be available.

When will I hear?

Definitely within 24 hours of submitting your consult, but likely much faster. We will aim to respond to those who need appointments booking that day within 1 hour of receiving the consult.

How will I hear?

You can chose whether you would like to be contacted by text or phone when you submit your request.

Phone call or face to face

The triaging GP will decide what type of consultation would be most appropriate given the information you give. If it is something that could be simply fixed over the phone they will advise this. If they ask to see you face to face, this means they know they would not be able to resolve the problem on the phone.

When can I submit my consult?

You can submit your consult between 8am and 5.30pm. Between 5.30 and 6.30 the phone lines remain open for urgent problems, but you would be asked to wait until 8am the next morning to submit your non urgent consult.

How do I get my prescription?

If you are requesting a one off prescription, or a change to your repeat medication, or your repeat medication is not possible to order online (ie your review is due) you can do this through the online consult.

If you are requesting your repeat medications, the easiest and fastest way to do this is with the NHS App, or through your SystmOne online account. If you need help with setting this up do ask reception.

What about my test results?

Like now, go to your SystmOne account or phone up for your results. Reception will directly book you a follow up appointment if this is what the GP has requested when looking at your results. If the GP did not mention follow up but you would like to ask questions, please fill in a consultation so we can arrange this.

How will I follow up with my GP?

If the GP has asked you to follow up, or if you feel this would be beneficial to you, fill in a consult and give some details, so we can send you a booking link in the right time scale.

Will I lose consistency with one GP?

No, when booking routine appointments we will always aim to book you with the GP you already know. This suits the GPs as much as it suits you.

Like now, if your problem is an emergency we will offer you an appointment with the GPs who are in on the day. This is the only way to safely see you in the right time scale when our GPs don't work every day.

What is a self-book link?

This is a link that we can send you which shows you all of a type of appointment available. For example, if you have seen Dr Burke and your results show that you need to see her in a routine appointment slot, the link would show you all of her available routine appointment slots so you can chose the time that is best for you. You will be able to see all the slots that reception would be able to see at that same moment.

Many of you will have used this system when booking COVID/ Flu appointments.

What if I'm not able to work the self-book link?

Call reception. They'll be able to see the type of appointment you've been asked to book and do this the old fashioned way!

How are you keeping my information safe?

We take this very seriously and the triage model has been built into our Data Protection Impact Assessment and Privacy Policy. Only our staff will have access to your consults and they are all

trained in Information Governance and Safeguarding. Accurx are registered and complaint with the Information Commissioners Office and work to the same standards as we do with your existing data.

What happens if the surgery power, internet or Accurx system goes down?

We have contingency plans in place for this. Incredibly rarely we may be forced to move to back to our previous phone model of booking appointments. We would adjust our phone messages and website to let you know this.

How does this process benefit me?

- For those of you who are tech savvy, you can quickly type your question without having to wait on the phone lines, and read feedback at a time that suits you.
- For those of you who are less tech savvy, the phone lines will be more free making it easier to get through.
- GPs review all consults- you know that you will be seen by the right person in the right timescale to fix your problem. Or if you need simple advice you won't have to wait 2 weeks to receive this.
- Patients who are hard of hearing, or whose mental health affects their ability to ring in will be able to access healthcare more easily.
- Easier to see available appointments for your clinician of choice so you can chose the best time for you.

How does this help the surgery?

At a time when pressure on health services is at an all time high, and resources are at an all time low, we need to be as efficient as possible when helping patients. This model helps ensure all patients are helped in the best way possible as soon as possible.

It will also help us in terms of space. Having a GP triaging on the computer will free up one of our 7 clinical rooms so we can back fill this with another clinician.

Where is the e-consult button?

It has disappeared and been replaced by the Accurx button. You can submit all your previous e-consults this way (and the form is much more simple!).

Where is the online appointment booking on SystemOne?

This will no longer be in operation when we move to the total triage model. Currently these appointments are a very inefficient use of GP time- often the problem could have been solved quickly on the phone if a GP knew what the question was. When a consult is received, patients will be sent an appropriate self-book link if this applies.

Complaint? Concern?

We ask that you work with us and give this model a bit of time to work. We are aware there will be teething problems (hence we are rolling this out in advance of 18th September to allow us to work through these). Please let Ruth McMahon, Practice Manager (manager.westernroadsurgerybillericay@nhs.net) know of your concerns and we will try to use these to refine the service.