

Secondary Care User Guide

Enhanced Advice & Guidance via Consultant Connect

This pack is designed to provide NHS clinicians with all the information needed to get the most from Consultant Connect.



E: hello@consultantconnect.org.uk
T: 01865 261467
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Introduction to Consultant Connect

Consultant Connect is a telemedicine provider transforming patient care through better communications. Used by over half the NHS in England, Scotland, and Wales, our services connect clinicians with specialists for rapid Advice & Guidance (A&G). Consultant Connect's services are utilised by:



>5,000 GP practices



>10,000 specialists



42 ICBs/Health Board areas



>130 hospitals



7 ambulance services



80% of users would recommend Consultant Connect to a colleague

Supported by the [National Consultant Network \(NCN\)](#), our Enhanced A&G service allows clinicians to communicate via telephone, photo, and messaging*. All A&G activity, including phone calls, messages, and photos, is IG-secure, GDPR-compliant, and recorded for medico-legal purposes. By having rapid and direct access to specialist advice, clinicians can ensure their patients get the right care in the right place the first time.

** Please note that available specialties and service features will differ by hospital and/or locality.*

How to sign up and access the service

Open your smartphone's camera feature and scan the QR code below. You will be redirected to the relevant app store to download the **free Consultant Connect App**. Once you have the app, open it and follow the simple steps to create your account.



You can also search 'Consultant Connect' on the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#) on your phone.

Create an account using your NHS email address or, if you already have one, log in.

Alternatively, you can [create an account](#) from your browser on your computer. Then, you can use the same credentials to download and start using the Consultant Connect App on your mobile phone. Once logged in, you will see a list of your service features and available specialties.

The Consultant Connect App

You can use the free Consultant Connect App, regardless of whether you answer A&G queries or not. The app allows you to*:

- Make phone **calls to specialist colleagues** at the touch of a button.
- Send **secure messages** to specialists, attaching images, reports, and files where required.
- Take **IG-secure patient photos** with a built-in 'patient consent' step.
- Utilise **pre-programmed Bypass Numbers**, allowing you to skip the queue on switchboard and speak directly to staff at local GP practices.
- Toggle between **multiple organisations** as needed.

Phone

Tap 'Phone' to make A&G calls to NHS specialists. You can also view the specialty's opening hours and where the specialists answering the calls are based. With an average connection time of **33 seconds**, this is a quicker alternative to calling through switchboard. The app is your pre-programmed phone directory, and all calls are recorded for medico-legal purposes.

Directory

Click 'Directory' to call GP practices using Bypass Numbers. You can locate practices via the search bar instead of scrolling through the directory. Easily distinguishable, Bypass Numbers are clearly labelled, allowing you to skip the queue on switchboard. If a Bypass Number is not available, the reception number will be displayed.

PhotoSAF

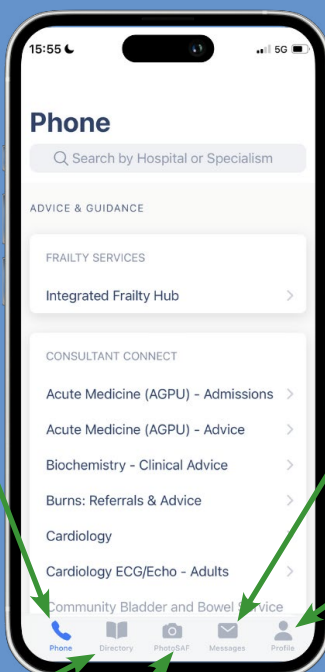
Use this feature to take secure clinical photos and add notes. Images are stored in an IG-secure and GDPR-compliant cloud, not on the device. The images and a PDF summary are automatically sent to your NHS email address. You can view and download saved images by logging in to Consultant Connect in your browser from any device. In areas where messaging is enabled, photos can also be sent within the app directly to colleagues for A&G.

Messages

In areas where this feature is enabled, you can send messages to colleagues within the app. With an easy-to-view message history for group or clinician-to-clinician queries, you can view all open and closed advice requests.

Profile

Select 'Profile' to view your account settings. You can also see your recent app activity, including logs of calls and messages for individual or department analysis. You can also toggle between organisations if you are a locum practitioner or work across multiple sites. If you require additional workplaces on your account, please get in touch. Select 'Call us' or 'Email us' to contact the Consultant Connect main office. Please do **not** include any PID.



** Please note that available service features will differ by hospital and/or locality.*

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Consultant Connect in your browser

If you cannot access the app or experience poor phone signal, [Consultant Connect in your browser](#) can be used to make calls via the Desktop Calling feature and send messages. Consultant Connect in your browser can also be utilised for data collection purposes; you can access all your Consultant Connect activity (calls, photos, messages) and download call recordings. Simply log in using your credentials for the app or sign up with your NHS email address. Service managers and admin teams can also be granted access to this feature so they can pull reports.

Consultant Connect in your browser allows you to:

- [Make calls to specialists.](#)
- [Securely store and share photos/files.](#)
- [Safely respond to A&G messages.](#)
- [Safely send messages and photos/files to specialists for advice.](#)
- [Access your call log and recordings](#) (please note that **only** authorised users can access PID call recordings and download them).
- [Access your photo log.](#)
- [Access your messages log.](#)
- Update the specialist call answering rota.

Your organisation's unique Dial-In Number

If you're unable to use the app or your computer, you can access Telephone A&G by calling your organisation's unique Dial-In Number from any phone. Your Dial-In Number, list of available specialties and their operating hours can be found on your online Service Directory.



If you do not know your Dial-In Number or have the link to your online Service Directory, please contact the Consultant Connect team at hello@consultantconnect.org.uk or **01865 261467**.

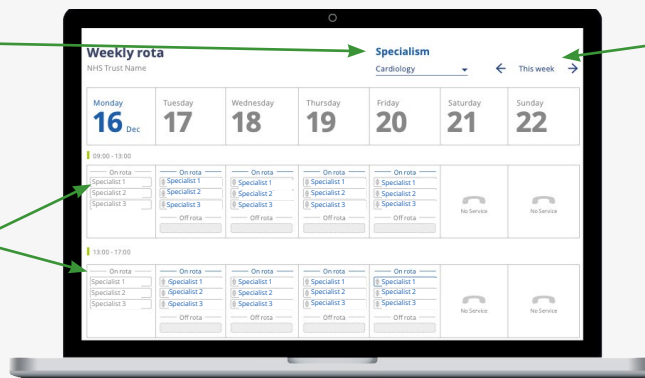
Specialist rota overview

Specialist rotas can be edited per session, day, and week. This overview is designed to show you how easy it is to view and edit the rotas you are on. Other staff, such as medical secretaries, personal assistants, or service managers, can be given access to edit the rotas on your behalf. If you require access to rota management, please email your Account Manager or the Consultant Connect team at hello@consultantconnect.org.uk.

View a dropdown of all specialist teams answering A&G at your organisation.

View the names of the specialists on and off the rota for each session for the week and specialty selected.

Specialists can expect to receive calls only on the sessions when they are on the rota.



See previous/upcoming rotas for the specialty team selected.

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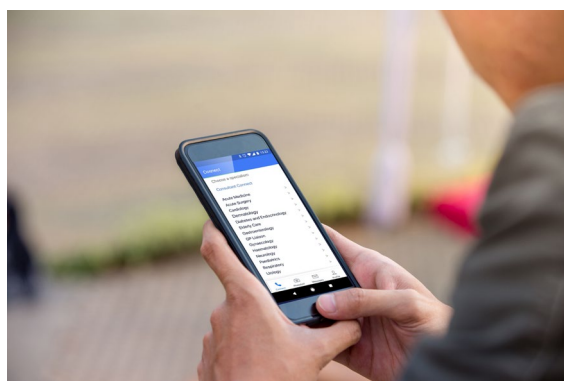
E: hello@consultantconnect.org.uk

T: 01865 261467

W: consultantconnect.org.uk

Quick service summary - access options and features

Feature	Access options		
	Consultant Connect App	Unique Dial-In Number	Consultant Connect in your browser
Make rapid A&G calls	Y	Y	Y
Take IG-secure clinical photos (photos are saved in a secure cloud not on your phone)	Y	N	N
Send secure messages and / or share photos with specialists	Y	N	Y
View specialties available and their operating hours	Y	N	Y
View your personal activity, toggle between organisations, request support, access your photos and profile settings	Y	N	Y
Store and share photos taken by patients securely	N	N	Y
Access your call recordings	N	N	Y
View your activity – calls, messages, and photos. Access PID records	N	N	Y
Convert A&G queries to e-RS referrals	N	N	Y
Respond to and action e-RS A&G worklists	N	N	Y



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Your dedicated Account Management Team

If you need any support or have additional questions, your dedicated Account Management Team are available.



Need help? The team can:

- Provide individuals or teams with bespoke demonstrations and answer any questions.
- Support with customised reports and analysis.
- Create personalised communications that can be distributed amongst local teams.
- Discuss transferring existing pathways to Consultant Connect and setting up PDSAs.

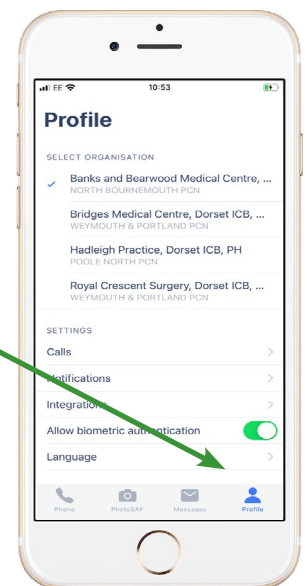
Accessing PID reports

Please note that access to patient-identifiable data (PID) is **only** available to the relevant user(s). Access is subject to role-based access controls and is via a secure web portal, including two-factor authentication and a unique long random password/username combination. Please see the [Information Governance Access Guide](#) for more information on accessing PID and the approval process.

Locum clinicians

Locum healthcare professionals who work across more than one site can access multiple organisations across participating NHS areas within Consultant Connect. Users can then toggle between hospitals/trusts under 'Profile' within the Consultant Connect App or in their browser.

To request additional access, please email hello@consultantconnect.org.uk or call **01865 261467**.



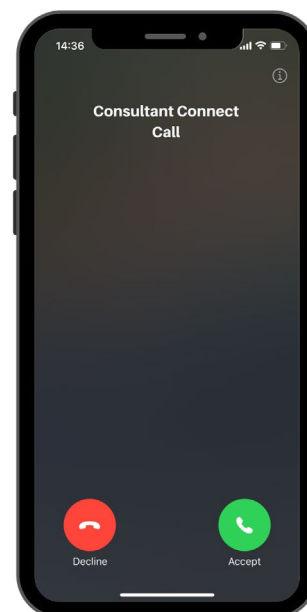
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Responding to A&G calls

All calls via Consultant Connect will arrive from a single inbound number: **01865 922021**, meaning personal numbers are never disclosed to other clinicians. **We recommend that you add this number to your contacts as 'Consultant Connect call'.**

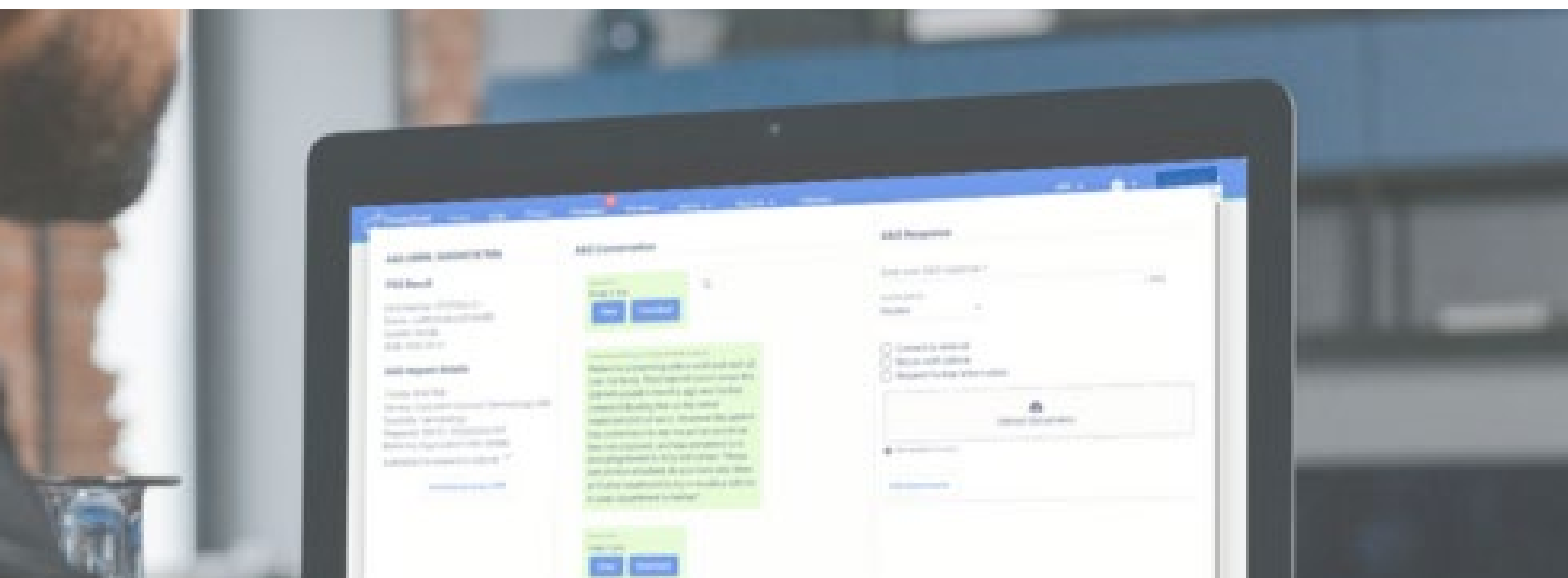
When answering a call via Consultant Connect, an automated message will prompt you to press or say '1' to speak to the clinician. If you are unavailable when a clinician calls, the system will automatically connect to the next person on the rota rather than sending the caller to voicemail.

The clinician seeking advice remains responsible for deciding what treatment is to be provided following the receipt of advice. They decide whether a referral or admission is appropriate or not. All calls are recorded for medico-legal purposes and can be accessed by you or your clinical lead as needed.



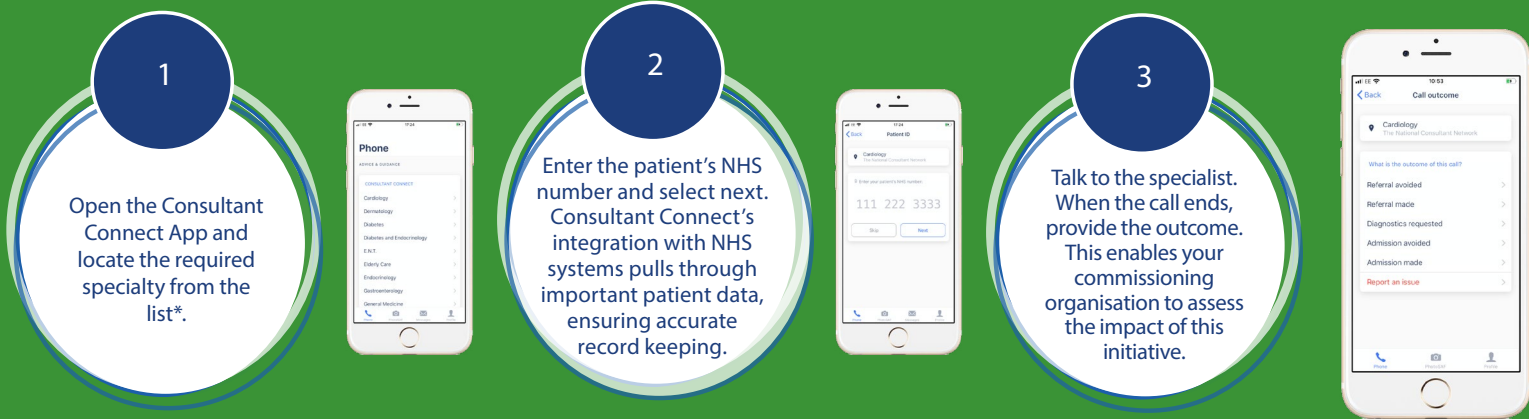
Making calls

You can use the Consultant Connect App, the Desktop Calling feature on [Consultant Connect in your browser](#), or your organisation's unique Dial-In Number to seek Telephone A&G. Calls are routed to a rota of specialists and are answered within **33 seconds** (UK average).



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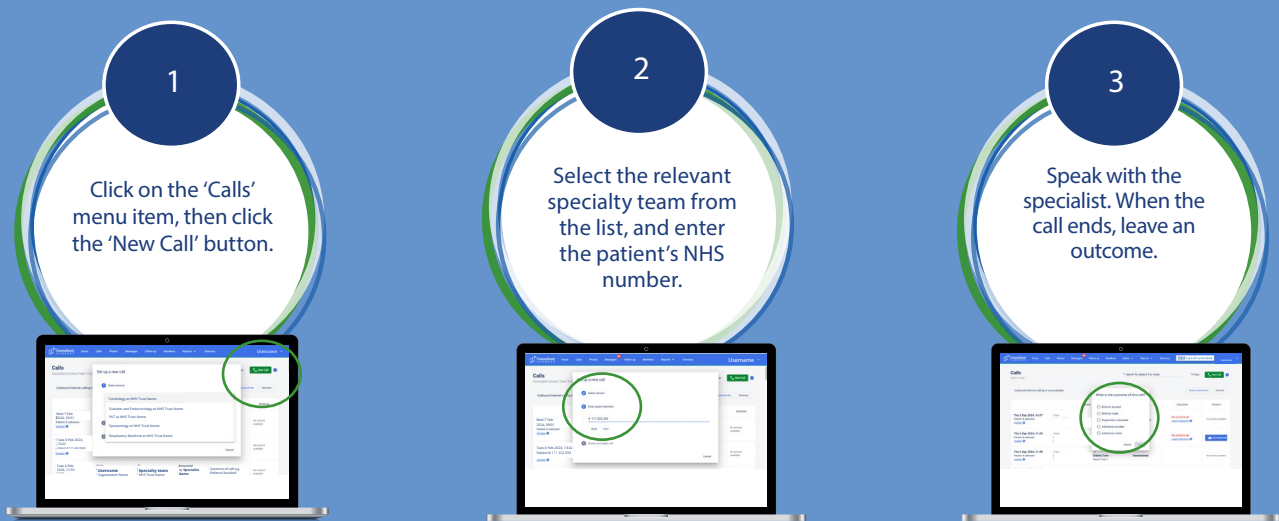
Calling on the app



*Please note available specialties will differ by hospital and/or locality.

Calling via the Desktop Calling feature

The Desktop Calling feature enables you to place rapid A&G calls to specialists from your computer. To start using this feature, log in to [Consultant Connect in your browser](#) using your credentials for the app. If you don't have an account yet, you can create one in minutes; all you need is an NHS email address.



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Calling your Dial-In Number

You can also obtain Telephone A&G by calling your organisation's unique Dial-In Number from any phone. Your Dial-In Number, list of available specialties and their operating hours can be found on your online Service Directory, which automatically updates to provide you with the latest information.

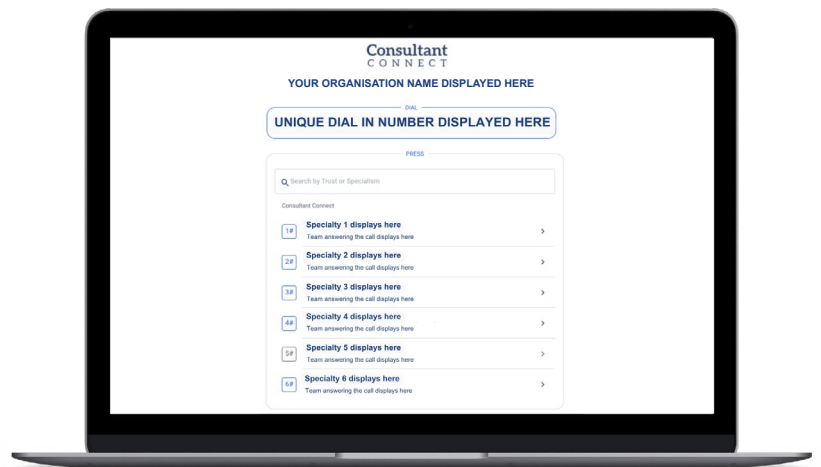
If you don't know your organisation's Dial-In Number, please email hello@consultantconnect.org.uk for further support.



*Please note available specialties will differ by hospital and/or locality.

Your Service Directory

[Your Service Directory](#) will show your surgery's unique Dial-In Number, all available Telephone A&G specialties and their operating hours. We recommend you bookmark it in your browser for easy access.

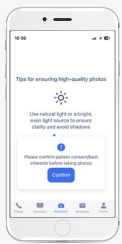


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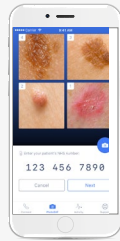
IG-secure clinical photography

You can use the PhotoSAF feature within the Consultant Connect App to take safe clinical photos. Images are saved to the IG-secure and GDPR-compliant cloud, not on the device, meaning photos won't appear on your camera roll or in the recently deleted folder. After taking images via PhotoSAF, they are automatically sent to your NHS email address, and you can access and download them via [Consultant Connect in your browser](#) to add to the patient's record or share with other specialty teams.

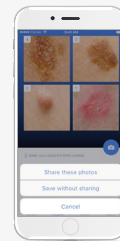
Using PhotoSAF



Log in to the Consultant Connect App and click 'PhotoSAF' at the bottom of your screen. Confirm your patient's consent and take photo(s).



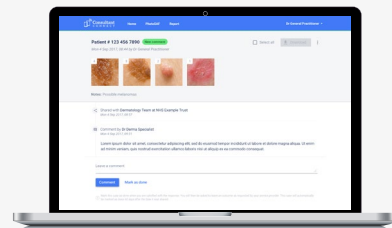
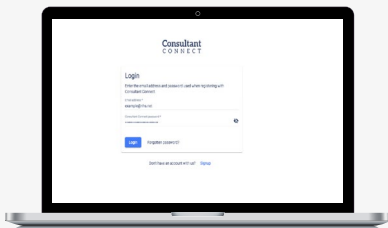
Add the patient's NHS number and type or dictate any notes. Consultant Connect's integration with NHS systems pull through important patient data, ensuring accurate record keeping.



Select 'Save these photos'.



Photos and notes are automatically sent to your NHS email address and are saved in the secure cloud.



To access and download your photos for onward use, log in to Consultant Connect in your browser using the same credentials use for the app. Click on the 'Photos' tab in the menu bar.

Click the 'Download photos' button to export the images as a PDF to a secure file location on your device.

 [Watch this short video on how to use PhotoSAF for more information.](#)



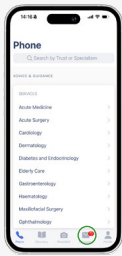
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Messaging A&G

Responding to messages

Messaging A&G can be provided via the Consultant Connect App or in your browser. If you are part of a specialty team responding to Messaging A&G requests, you will be alerted by in-app and email notifications when a new or follow-up message has been received. How you are notified will depend on how you choose to access the service and your settings.

Messaging in the app



Open the Consultant Connect App and click 'Messages'. A red dot on the icon will indicate an unread message.



Select the query and type your advice or ask further questions. If needed, other clinicians in your specialty team can reply to the message thread, allowing for shared responsibility for a query.



Once the query has been resolved, any clinicians involved in the thread can close the case and leave an outcome.

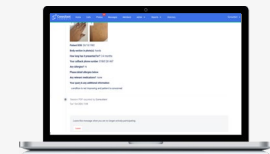


The conversation is securely saved. The message(s) and photo(s) can be downloaded via [Consultant Connect in your browser](#).

Messaging in your browser



[Log in](#) to Consultant Connect in your browser using your credentials for the app or sign up with your NHS email address. Click on the 'Messages' menu item. A red dot will indicate an unread message.



Select the query and type your advice or ask further questions. If needed, other clinicians in your specialty team can reply to the message thread, allowing for shared responsibility for the query.



Once the query has been resolved, any clinicians involved in the thread can close the case and leave an outcome.



The conversation is securely saved, and the message(s) and photo(s) can be downloaded at any time.

 [Watch this short video on how to respond to A&G messages for more information.](#)

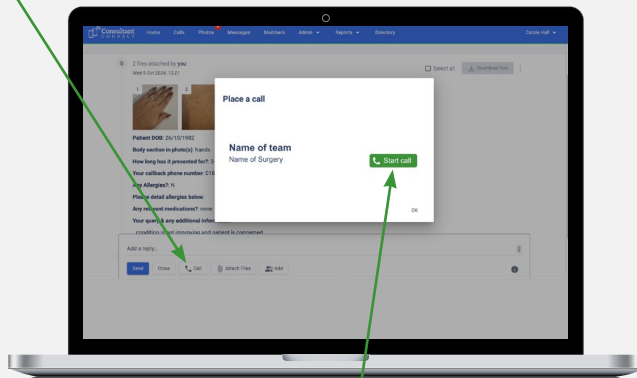
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'Call back' feature

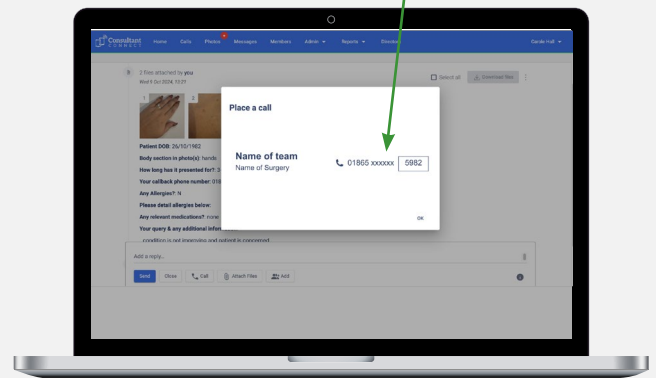
You can use the 'call back' feature to make rapid telephone calls to the clinician seeking advice. All clinicians who have sent a message within a thread can be contacted using the 'call back' feature.

To use the 'Call back' feature via Consultant Connect in your browser, log in and follow the simple steps illustrated below:

1 Click the 'Call' button



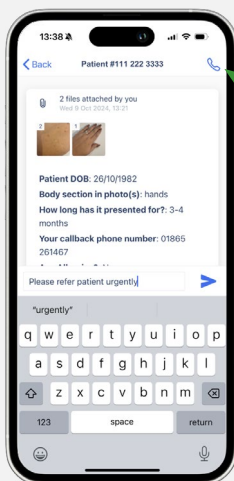
3 Call the telephone number on screen from any phone. You will hear an automated message asking you to enter the 4 digit code displayed on screen



2 Then, click 'Start Call'

4 Speak to the clinician to discuss the patient case. All calls, including answerphone messages, are recorded and tracked

To use the 'Call back' feature via the **Consultant Connect App**, simply tap the phone icon on the top right-hand corner of the open message screen to call the clinician directly.



You can also use the 'Call back' feature when using the Consultant Connect App to respond to a Messaging A&G query. Simply tap the phone icon on the top right-hand corner of the open message screen to call the clinician directly.


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Sending messages for A&G

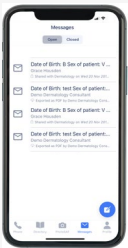

Send IG-secure messages for group or clinician-to-clinician A&G or internal communication, attaching photos and files to support requests at the touch of a button. Patient images and videos not taken using the app can be uploaded and sent via [Consultant Connect in your browser](#) for input.

Images up to 211MB can be uploaded without loss of resolution, compared to limits of 10MB or less on other systems, such as email. This means messaging can be used for large files, such as dermatoscopic images and OCT scans.


Messaging via the app




Open the Consultant Connect App and select 'Messages'.



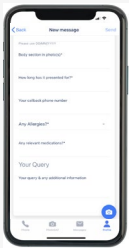
Select the blue button in the bottom right-hand corner and choose the specialty you wish to message.




Enter the patient's NHS number and click 'Next'. Consultant Connect's integration with NHS systems pulls through important patient data, ensuring accurate record-keeping.




Fill in the messaging proforma and take any photos using the camera icon if needed.




Click 'Send' in the top right-hand corner to share your message with the relevant specialty team.



You will receive an email notification and, depending on your settings, an app alert when a specialist reviews and responds to your query.

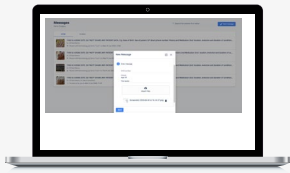


Once the query has been resolved, any of the clinicians involved in the thread can close the case and leave an outcome. The conversation is securely saved, and images and notes can be downloaded as a PDF by logging in to Consultant Connect in your browser.

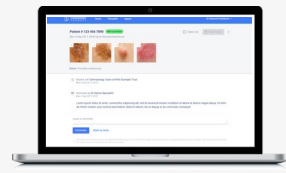


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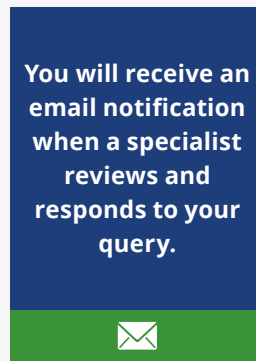
Messaging in your browser



Log in to [Consultant Connect in your browser](#) using your credentials for the app or sign up with your NHS email address. Select 'Messages' from the menu and 'New Message'.



Choose the specialty you wish to message, enter the patient's NHS number, and complete the messaging proforma. If needed, upload patient files/images, and click 'Send' to share your message with the relevant specialty team.

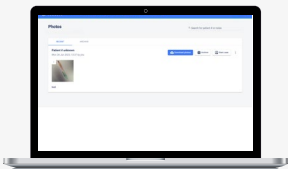


Once the query has been resolved, any of the clinicians involved in the thread can close the case and leave an outcome. The conversation is securely saved, and images and notes can be downloaded as a PDF at any time.

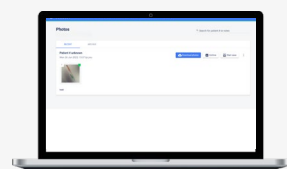
 [Watch this short video on how to send messages for Advice & Guidance for more information.](#)

Deleting photos in your browser

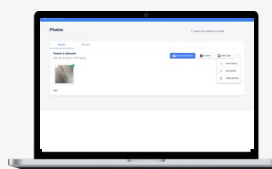
All photos taken within the Consultant Connect App are securely stored within the cloud, meaning your data is always safe, but should you need to delete images, it is easy and straightforward.



Log in to [Consultant Connect in your browser](#) using your credentials for the app, and select 'Photos' from the menu.



Hover over the thumbnail of the photo(s) you want to delete and tick the box(es).



To delete the selected photo(s), click the ellipsis dropdown menu on the far right and select 'Delete selected photos'.



If you need support with deleting images from cases on behalf of your colleagues, please email a member of the team at hello@consultantconnect.org.uk.

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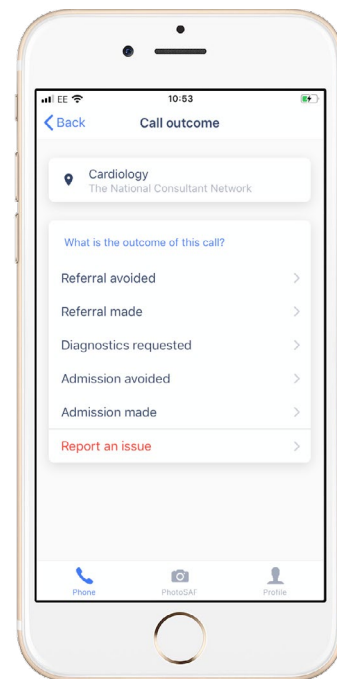
Leaving an outcome

At the end of each call or after a message has been closed, the system will ask the clinician to leave an outcome, e.g., 'Referral avoided'. The advice seeker is always the first person to be asked to leave an outcome; however, if they do not do so, the responder is then prompted to provide an outcome.

Why this is important:

- You can easily track the patient's pathway.
- It's an important way to secure the future of the service – your hospital/trust can see statistics showing how effective the service is. This allows them to add more specialties for you to utilise.

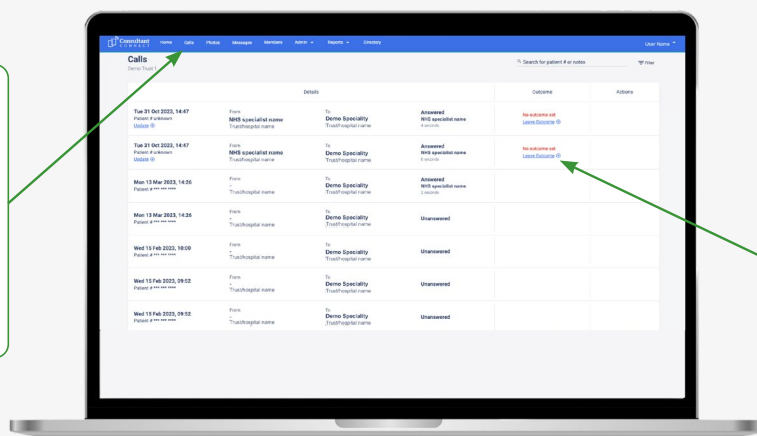
Following receipt of A&G, the advice seeker is prompted to leave an outcome for the interaction. When using the Consultant Connect App, a menu with outcome options will appear on the screen. Select an outcome from the menu by tapping it. An outcome can also be left via [Consultant Connect in your browser](#).



Retrospective outcomes

You can leave an outcome at any time via [Consultant Connect in your browser](#). The call and message history does not expire, so you can update and add outcomes when convenient. For calls made via your organisation's Dial-In Number, where the individual placing the call is unknown, admin staff can be granted additional access to assign calls to clinicians at your hospital/trust. To allocate additional access, please contact your Account Manager or email hello@consultantconnect.org.uk.

1 Once logged in, click on the 'Calls' tab. Here you will see a complete list of calls you have answered using the app or 'Desktop Calling' feature.



2 To leave an outcome, click 'Leave Outcome' underneath the 'Outcome' column. You can also retrospectively add patient NHS numbers to call recordings.

*Please note that available outcomes may differ by healthcare area.

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Bypass Numbers

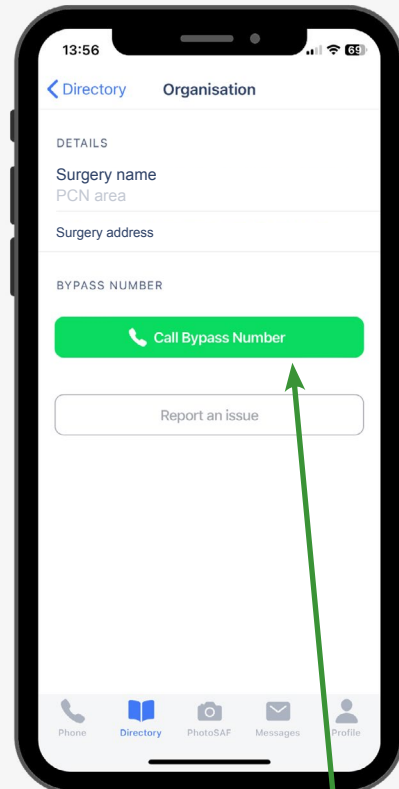
Accessed via the Consultant Connect App, the pre-programmed Bypass Numbers feature allows you to skip the queue on switchboard and speak directly to staff at local GP practices. If a Bypass Number is not available, the reception number will be displayed and clearly labelled.

Open the Consultant Connect App and [log in](#).



Tap the Directory icon:

Here you will see an alphabetised list of local GP practices. Locate the practice you need to contact via the search bar or by scrolling through the directory.



Place a call:

Once you have selected a practice and are ready to place your call, click 'Call Bypass Number'. If the Bypass Number is unavailable, the reception number will be displayed with the option to 'Call reception number'.


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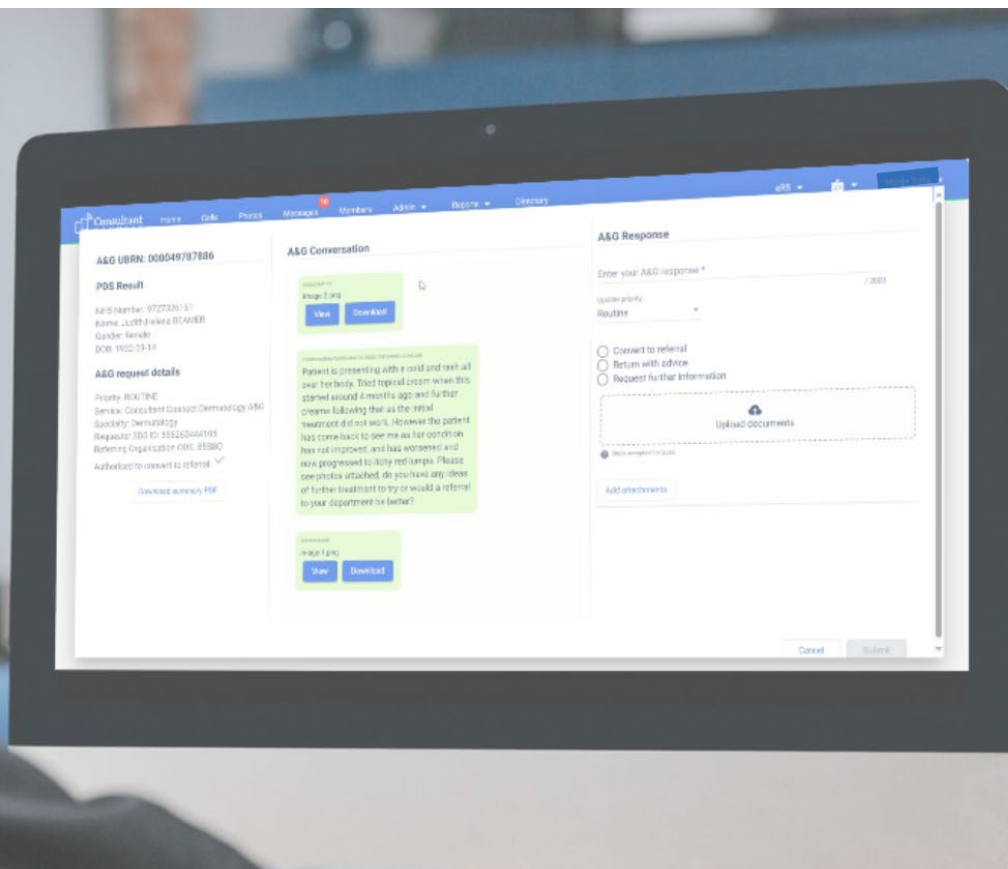
e-RS Connect A&G Worklists

This is the quickest way for secondary care clinicians to view, respond to and action e-RS A&G worklists. As they would on the e-RS platform, the feature enables specialists to use Consultant Connect to convert the A&G request to a referral, ask for more information, or return the request with advice.

Why use e-RS Connect for A&G worklists?

- Quick and easy to use, no training required
- Attachments displayed on screen, no need to download
- Immediate export of activity report
- Do everything that you can in e-RS but 2-4 times faster
- Capture bespoke data for local use (e.g., through text fields/drop-down menus)
- Copies of A&G stored, export to EPR (optional)

 Please see the [e-RS Connect A&G worklists user guide](#) or watch the [demonstration video](#) for more information.



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Consultant Connect reports in your browser

When you log in from your computer, you will see the 'Home page'.

Here you can:

- View your organisation's summary statistics across all specialties for the last 12 months, including calls, photos, and messages.
- If you scroll down, activity and performance statistics are listed, including the number of calls placed and answered, the connection rate and speed, the call duration, and the outcomes reported.

Clinicians usually prefer their service managers and admin staff to access this so they can review and download PID reports as needed.

Access your calls report

If you click on 'Reports' and 'Calls', you can see more detailed information.

Use the call report to:

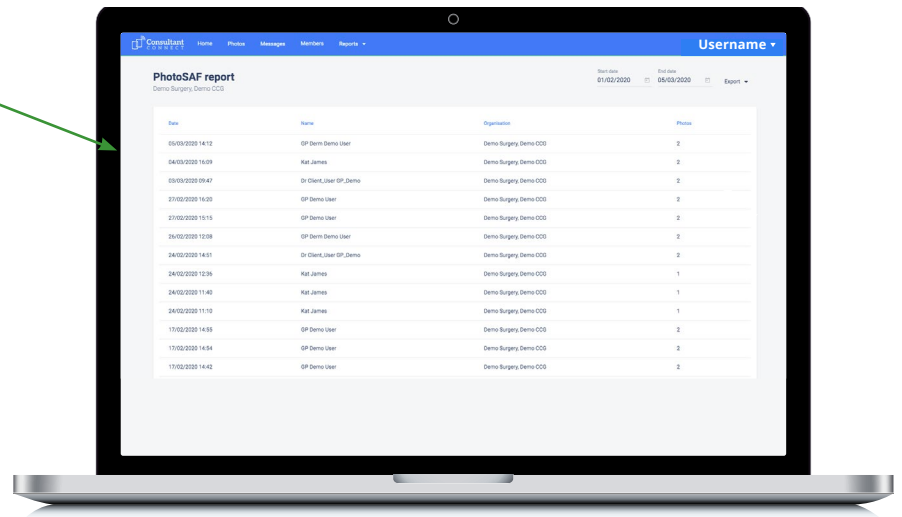
- View the date and time the call was made.
- View the name of the person/organisation who made the call.
- Change the date range for call reports.
- View how many specialists were tried before a call was answered, the wait time before the call was answered, and the length of the conversation.
- Export report data to an Excel spreadsheet for analysis.
- View the reported call outcome. If the outcome shows '-', this means neither clinician left an outcome. You can easily add outcomes retrospectively (please see [page 16](#) for more information).
- Download recordings of calls you have made or answered. Indicated by a cloud icon, clicking this button will save an MP3 file of the call recording your device.

Date	Time	Patient #	Gender	Surgery	CCS	Operation	Consultant	Trust	Refs	Wait time (secs)	Talk time (secs)	Outcome	Recording
26/02/2021	13:10	XXX	-	Demo Surgery, Demo CCS	Demo CCS	Paediatrics - Urgent Referrals Advice	XXX	Demo Trust 1	1	23	19	-	📁
26/02/2021	10:08	XXX	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCS	Demo CCS	Paediatrics - Urgent Referrals Advice	XXX	Demo Trust 1	1	5	109	-	📁
25/03/2021	14:44	XXX	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCS	Demo CCS	Diabetes and Endocrinology	XXX	Demo Trust 1	2	28	32	Referral avoided	📁
25/02/2021	13:58	XXX	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCS	Demo CCS	Paediatrics - Urgent Referrals Advice	XXX	Demo Trust 1	3	88	-	-	📁
24/02/2021	13:09	XXX	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCS	Demo CCS	Diabetes and Endocrinology	XXX	Demo Trust 1	2	29	24	Admission made	📁
24/02/2021	12:48	XXX	-	Demo Surgery, Demo CCS	Demo CCS	Diabetes and Endocrinology	XXX	Demo Trust 1	2	30	5	Admission made	📁
22/02/2021	15:37	XXX	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCS	Demo CCS	Diabetes and Endocrinology	XXX	Demo Trust 1	2	22	7	Referral made	📁

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Access your photos log

Click on 'Reports' and then 'Photos'. Here, you will see all the photos you have taken via the app or uploaded in your browser and saved. Select the download button next to the photo to download each image to a secure file location on your device.

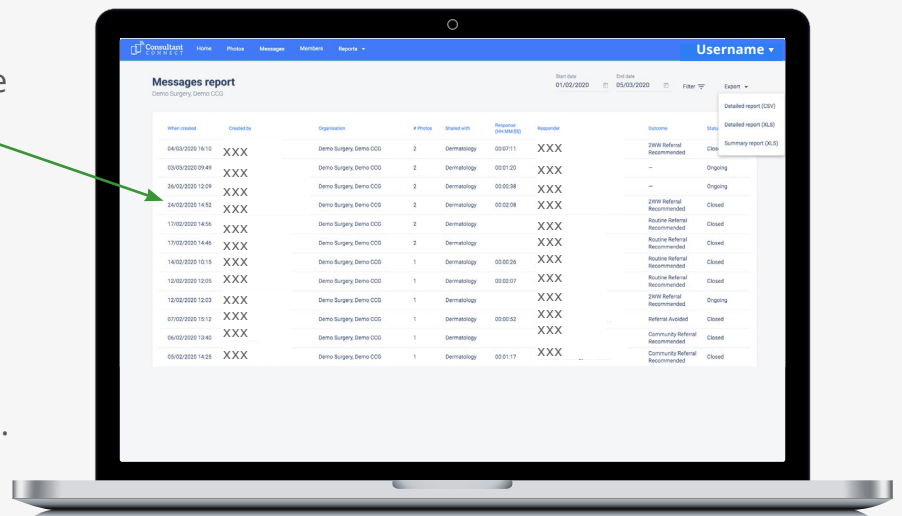


Date	Name	Organisation	Photo
05/02/2020 14:12	GP Demo Demo User	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2
04/02/2020 16:09	Kat James	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2
03/02/2020 09:47	Dr Client_User GP_Demo	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2
27/02/2020 16:20	GP Demo User	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2
27/02/2020 15:15	GP Demo User	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2
25/02/2020 12:38	GP Demo Demo User	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2
24/02/2020 14:51	Dr Client_User GP_Demo	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2
24/02/2020 12:36	Kat James	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	1
24/02/2020 11:40	Kat James	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	1
24/02/2020 11:10	Kat James	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	1
17/02/2020 14:58	GP Demo User	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2
17/02/2020 14:54	GP Demo User	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2
17/02/2020 14:42	GP Demo User	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2

Access your messages report

If you click 'Report' and 'Messages', to:

- View the date and time the message was initiated.
- Change the date range for message reports.
- View the date for when the first message was sent, who sent it, and where they work.
- View how many photos were included in the message(s), if applicable, and which specialty team the message was shared with.
- View the reported outcome for closed cases. If the outcome shows '-', this means no outcome was left. The status indicates whether a case has been closed or is ongoing.



When created	Created by	Organisation	# Photos	Shared with	Response (Out/In/Ref)	Responder	Outcome	Status
04/03/2020 16:10	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2	Dermatology	000711	XXX	2018 Referral Recommended	Closed
03/03/2020 09:49	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2	Dermatology	000120	XXX	-	Ongoing
26/02/2020 12:28	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2	Dermatology	000238	XXX	-	Ongoing
24/02/2020 14:52	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2	Dermatology	000238	XXX	2018 Referral Recommended	Closed
17/02/2020 14:56	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2	Dermatology	XXX	XXX	Acute Referral Recommended	Closed
17/02/2020 14:46	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	2	Dermatology	XXX	XXX	Acute Referral Recommended	Closed
14/02/2020 10:15	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	1	Dermatology	000238	XXX	Acute Referral Recommended	Closed
13/02/2020 12:08	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	1	Dermatology	000207	XXX	Acute Referral Recommended	Closed
13/02/2020 12:03	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	1	Dermatology	XXX	XXX	2018 Referral Recommended	Ongoing
07/02/2020 15:12	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	1	Dermatology	000032	XXX	Referral Awaited	Closed
06/02/2020 10:40	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	1	Dermatology	XXX	XXX	Community Referral Recommended	Closed
05/02/2020 14:28	XXX	Demo Surgery, Demo CCG	1	Dermatology	000117	XXX	Community Referral Recommended	Closed

Please note that **only** authorised users can see PID reports for Consultant Connect activity they have not been involved in. Additional access is subject to role-based access controls and is via a secure web portal, including two-factor authentication and a unique long random password/username combination. Please see the [Information Governance Access Guide](#) for more information on accessing PID and the approval process.

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Patient Initiated Follow Ups (PIFU)

PIFU reduces unnecessary visits to hospitals and patient waiting times, and releases you to see patients in a more timely manner. This is the simplest and most effective way of delivering follow-up consultations where you do not need to see the patient.

There are three pathway options available:

Option 1: Patient calls, clinician answers

Patient calls local telephone number.



- Call is put through to a 'rota' of on-call clinicians
- If the first clinician is unable to answer, the call moves on to the next



Clinician answers, delivers follow-up consultation

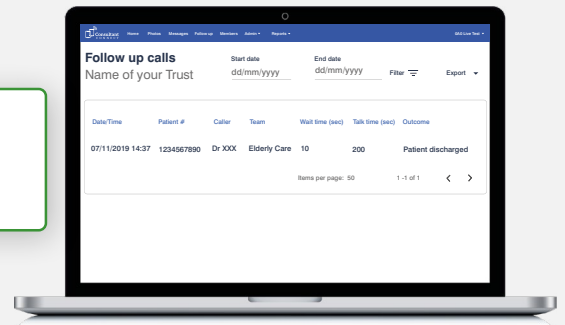


Patient discharged

Telephone follow-up consultation scheduled

Face-to-face follow-up consultation scheduled

- ✓ Incoming patient calls are tracked and recorded
- ✓ Medico legal protection



Option 2: Patient calls, clinician calls back

Patient calls local telephone number.



- Call is put through to the medical secretary
- Call back is scheduled



Clinician calls patient back, delivers follow-up consultation

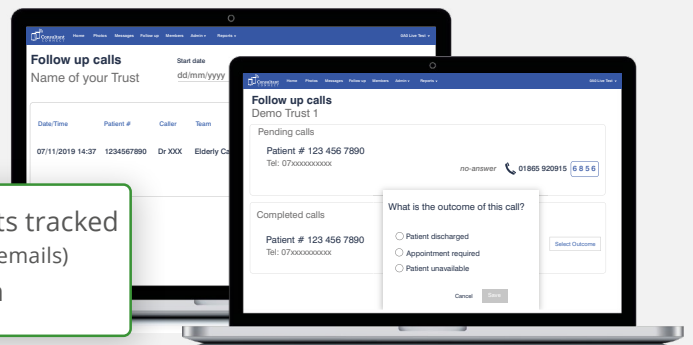


Patient discharged

Telephone follow-up consultation scheduled

Face-to-face follow-up consultation scheduled

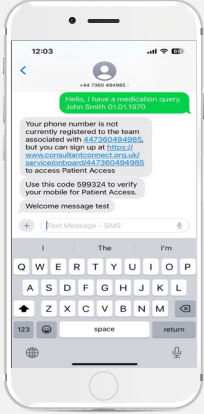
- ✓ Clinician calls to patients tracked and recorded (including voicemails)
- ✓ Medico legal protection



Patient Initiated Follow Ups (PIFU) continued

Option 3: Patient sends SMS, clinician messages back

Patient sends SMS via Patient Access.



- Specialty team is notified via email
- Clinician logs in to secure Consultant Connect platform to read query



Clinician messages back. They can also call the patient or ask them to upload images via a secure link

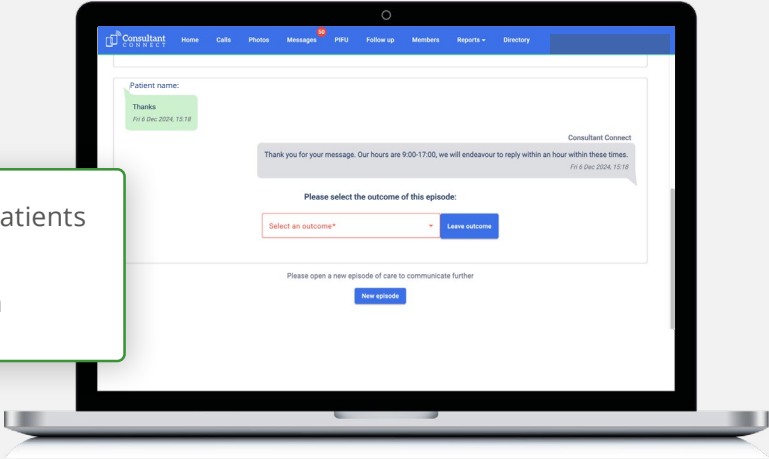



Patient discharged

Telephone follow-up consultation scheduled

Face-to-face follow-up consultation scheduled

- ✓ Clinician messages to patients tracked and recorded
- ✓ Medico legal protection



 Watch the [Patient Access demonstration video](#) for more information.



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Patient Connect (virtual consultations)

Patient Connect allows you to deliver IG-secure virtual consultations via a telephone call. All data and call recordings are available in real-time via Consultant Connect in your browser.

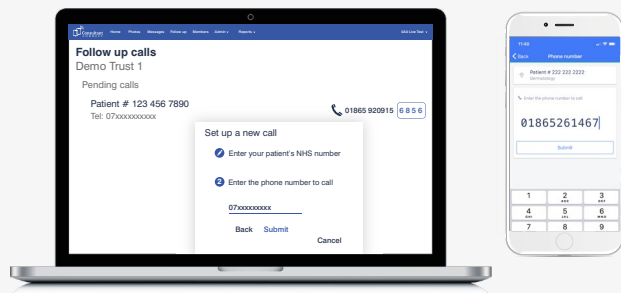
To set up and make a Patient Connect call via telephone:

If using a computer, log in to Consultant Connect in your browser and select the 'Follow Up' menu item on your screen.

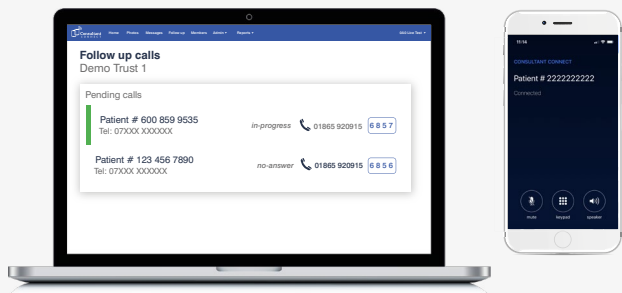
OR

If using a smartphone or tablet, log in to the Consultant Connect App and select the 'Follow Up' menu item on your screen.

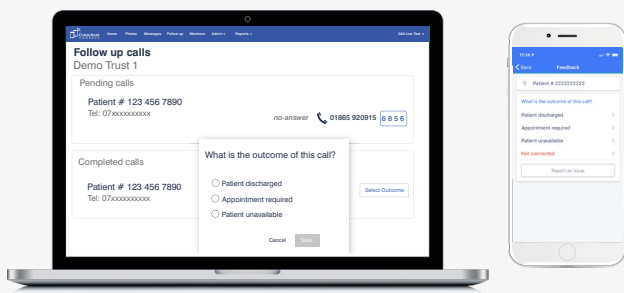
- 1 Set up the call
Enter the patient's NHS number and telephone number.



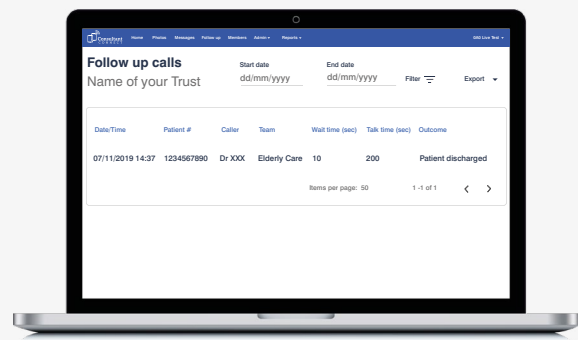
- 2 Speak to the patient
Through the app or by dialling the unique Dial-In Number and PIN.



- 3 Select call outcome
'Patient discharged'
'Appointment required'
'Patient unavailable'



- 4 Access call reports
All calls, including answerphone messages, are recorded and tracked.



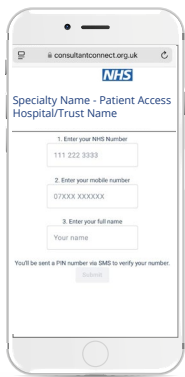
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Patient Access

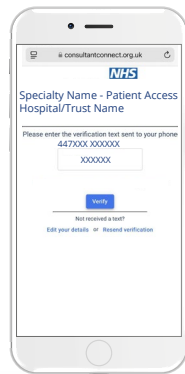
Patient Access is an **easy and secure way** for patients to initiate follow up consultations by SMS. Clinicians are notified when a new message is received and use Consultant Connect in their browser to respond. They can also ask patients to upload images or call the patients where necessary. All data included messages and any photos sent by patients are available in real-time via [Consultant Connect in your browser](#).

Patient registration:

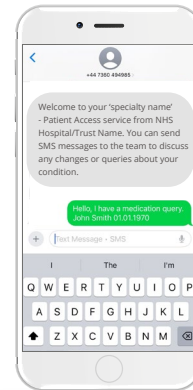
Patients suitable for the Patient Access service are added to the system. They receive an automated SMS including a link to a short registration form to complete:



They complete the online registration form and enter their NHS number, mobile number, full name and click 'Submit'.

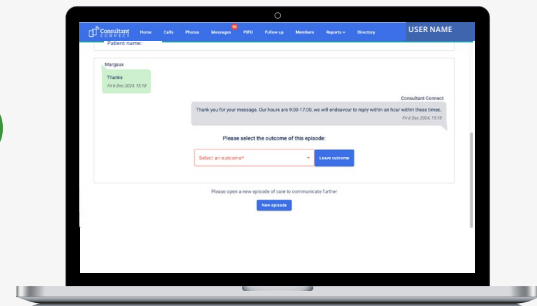
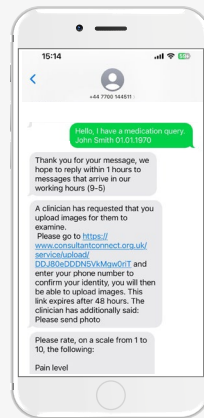
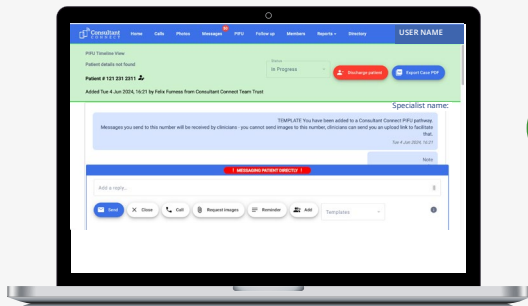


The system sends them a PIN number via SMS. They enter the PIN number to verify their mobile number.



The patient receives a 'welcome' SMS once the verification is complete. They can then start using Patient Access to send queries to the specialty team.

Specialty team replies to new messages:



The specialty team is notified via email when a new Patient Access message has been received. They login to [Consultant Connect in their browser](#) to read and respond to the message, they can also:

- Ask the patient to upload images via a secure link
- Call the patient

The patient receives response via Patient Access and can send an SMS back or upload images if needed.

The specialist marks the episode of care closed when they are satisfied with the interaction. They are asked to leave an outcome. A PDF summary of the episode of care can be downloaded to upload to the patient record.

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Your feedback

Our 2025 feedback survey found that **80% of users would recommend Consultant Connect** to a colleague. Here is some of your feedback:

“

'Consultant Connect makes things easier! Approximately **70% of calls answered in our organisation resulted in a referral being avoided**, which saves the NHS and its employees time and money. Most importantly, Consultant Connect helps patients access the best care and will have a hugely significant positive impact on their health.'

- Nurse in South East London

”

“

'It's **easy to use** and I've received a **very quick response** when assistance is required from the Consultant Connect Team.'

- Secondary care clinician in Salford

”

“

'It is a very **efficient and innovative way to get expert consultant advice** for patients.'

- Non-medical prescriber pharmacist in Medway & Swale

”

“

'It's brilliant! There's nothing to replace an expert view at the time that is required. **Helps the non-specialist get it right the first time and helps secondary care to decrease their clinic appointments and admissions.**

The software works to ensure that all calls from any GP are easily identified as a Consultant Connect call, and so can be prioritised by the recipient of the call. The calls are recorded, and they are easily counted for activity logging.'

- Consultant in Leicestershire

”

“

'I've mainly used Consultant Connect for dermatology. **It's an excellent service with a fast turnaround.** It enables us to provide our patients with the best care possible and avoids needing to send them to hospital.'

- Resident doctor in South East London

”

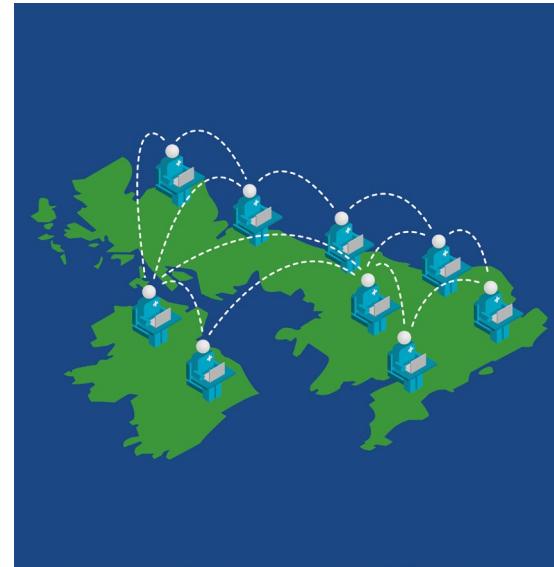
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Referral Triage and Validation

Our clinically-led Referral Triage and Validation service supports Trusts needing additional temporary capacity for referrals. The service uses the clinical expertise of NHS consultants across all main elective care specialties from our National Consultant Network (NCN). Working remotely as 'virtual locums', they follow local pathways and protocols, and, under the leadership of the local clinical leads, support with triaging and validating waiting list backlogs in bulk and/or new referrals as they come in.

Key benefits

- Manages high volumes quickly
- Returns referrals with a management plan to Primary Care where appropriate
- Identifies important upgrades as well as downgrades
- Directs referrals to the right service the first time
- Initiates diagnostics where needed
- Follows local pathways
- Communicates all results via e-RS
- Charged on a per-referral basis
- 100% outcome reporting
- Validates follow-up lists to ensure patients are seen/ discharged in the most appropriate way



[Find out more and see the impact of the service.](#)

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Telemedicine Devices

State-of-the-art 'virtual presence' devices allow specialist clinicians to deliver critical support to colleagues without being physically present.

The versatility of the devices allows for them to be effectively deployed over a range of healthcare settings, from neonatology to routine clinics, ensuring that you can maximise the effectiveness of your workforce.

Current examples of usage include large multi-site NHS Trusts that have optimised their available clinicians, cut down on travel time between sites, reduced emissions, and increased patient-facing time – improving chances of earlier discharge.

Key Benefits

- Instant access to specialist advice from anywhere in the world
- Enables equity of access to services across a region e.g., specialist care, mental health
- Improves patient care through increased specialist-led care
- Mobilises and maximises the efficiency of your workforce
- Increases opportunities for learning from specialists
- Minimal training and set-up required – the single virtual care platform enables all devices to be connected on a universally accessible network for enhanced communication
- Opportunity to provide your services to other regions or countries e.g., patient consultations outside of your area.



[Find out how NHS areas are using Telemedicine Devices.](#)

* Please note that Referral Triage and Validation, and telemedicine devices sit outside the current scope of work and, therefore, will incur additional costs.

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FAQs and case studies



[Read the Secondary Care FAQs](#)



Take a look at our [case studies](#)

If you require support with your Consultant Connect service, please email hello@consultantconnect.org.uk or call **01865 261467**.



Download the app to get started

Open your smartphone's camera feature and scan the QR code. You will be redirected to the relevant app store to download the free Consultant Connect App.

You can also search 'Consultant Connect' on the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#) on your phone.



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