

# Your general practice team



A range of healthcare professionals work at, or work from, your local surgery to help you get the right care as quickly as possible.

This leaflet tells you a bit more about the roles you might find at your practice, and what services they may be able to offer.

Roles and services will differ between practices.

**[kentandmedway.icb.nhs.uk/GP-team](https://kentandmedway.icb.nhs.uk/GP-team)**

# Reception team/care navigators



Some members of a practice's reception team are specially trained to know about the care and services available to you.

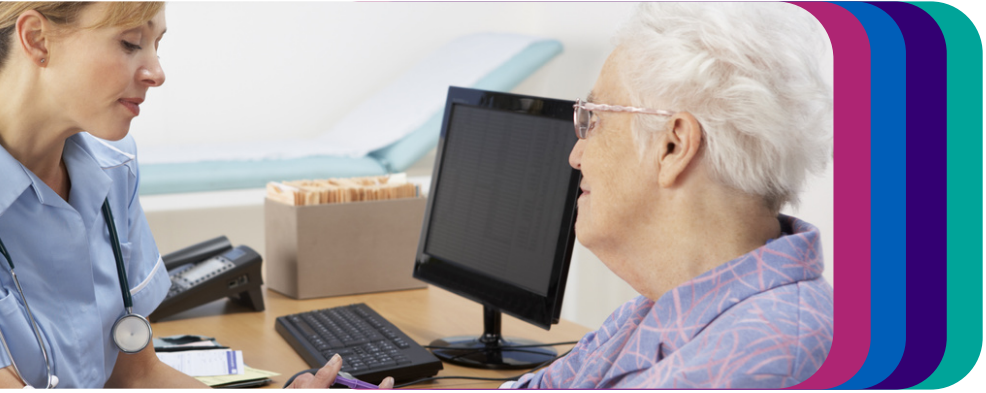
While the name of this role may differ in your practice, they'll listen and talk to you in confidence about your health problem, to understand your needs, so they can book you an appointment with the right healthcare professional or service.

They ask questions to make sure you can see the right person, as quickly as possible.

They can help you:

- get seen as soon as possible
- know whether self-referral is available for certain services at your practice or in your area
- make appointments for new kinds of care or new services you may not be aware of
- access the appropriate healthcare professional.

# General practice nurses



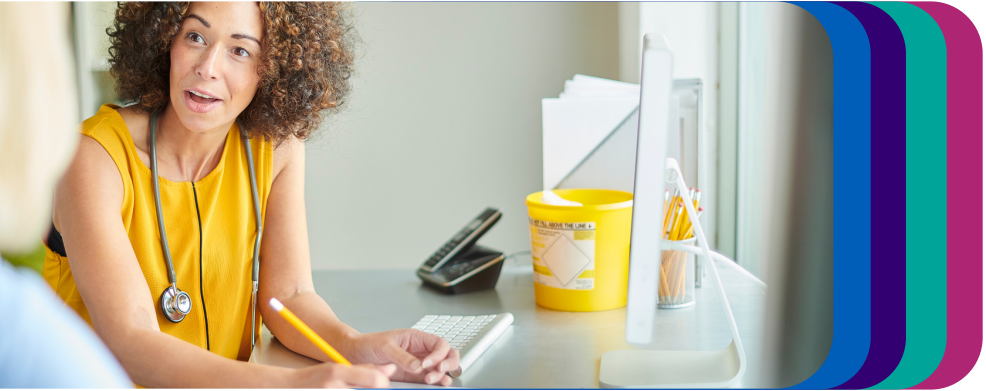
Nurses in general practice have a wide range of skills and roles and are involved in almost every aspect of a patient's care; assessing, screening and treating people of all ages.

In addition to providing traditional aspects of nursing care such as wound care, immunisations and administration of medicines, they run health checks and clinics for those with long-term conditions such as asthma, heart disease and diabetes.

They can help with:

- vaccinations and injections
- supporting people with long-term conditions such as asthma and diabetes
- healthy living advice such as stopping smoking and weight loss
- family planning and sexual health advice, including smear tests
- screening.

# General practitioners (GPs)



GPs oversee all aspects of patient care. They meet regularly with other members of the practice team to plan joint approaches to coordinate a patient's care.

All other members of the practice team work under the supervision of a GP.

They can help with:

- diagnosing and treating a health condition
- ordering tests and interpreting results
- prescribing medication where necessary
- referring you to hospital and other medical services for urgent and specialist treatment.

# Social prescribing link workers



Social prescribing involves helping people to improve their health and wellbeing by connecting them to activities in the community.

Link workers connect those feeling lonely, overwhelmed or in need of help to a range of local support, from community and activity groups to work, debt or housing advice.

They can help with:

- getting people to focus on their own priorities and the things that affect their wellbeing
- supporting people to take more control of their health
- introducing people to groups and activities in their community.

# Clinical pharmacists



Clinical pharmacists are experts in medicines and can help people stay as well as possible. They support those with long-term conditions like asthma, diabetes and high blood pressure or anyone taking multiple medicines to make sure their medication is working.

They work with GPs, local pharmacies and hospitals to make sure medicine services are joined up.

Many clinical pharmacists can also prescribe medicines.

They can help with:

- advice about medicines and side effects
- prescribing medicines.

# Advanced clinical practitioners



Advanced clinical practitioners come from a range of clinical backgrounds such as nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy and paramedics.

They are highly trained and have the knowledge and skills to manage all aspects of patient care.

They can help with:

- diagnosing and treating health conditions
- ordering tests and interpreting results
- prescribing medications.

# Community paramedics



Paramedics work in a variety of roles within general practice. Their background in pre-hospital care means that they are used to working with people with a variety of health conditions, from coughs and minor injuries to more serious conditions such as asthma and heart attacks.

They work alongside GPs and help manage routine or urgent appointments, telephone triage (assessment of urgency of illness or injury) and home visits.

They can help with:

- diagnosing and treating health conditions
- ordering tests and interpreting results
- supporting people with long-term conditions, such as arthritis and diabetes.



# Healthcare assistants



Healthcare assistants work under the guidance of a nurse or another healthcare professional. They help with routine health checks and provide patients with general health and wellbeing advice.

They can help with:

- health checks, such as blood pressure monitoring or taking blood samples
- vaccinations and injections
- healthy living advice, such as stopping smoking and weight loss
- dressings and stitch removal.

# Physiotherapists



Physiotherapists in general practice are experts in musculoskeletal conditions.

They are able to assess, diagnose and treat a range of complex muscle and joint conditions preventing the need for referrals to hospital.

They can arrange swift access to further treatment, investigations and specialists when needed.

They can help with:

- diagnosing and treating muscular and joint conditions
- advising on how to manage your condition
- referrals on to specialist services.

# Mental health therapists and practitioners



Mental health professionals in general practice may also be known as psychological wellbeing practitioners, high intensity therapists or cognitive behavioural therapists, and work as part of 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies' (IAPT) services.

They specialise in mental health and use a range of talking therapies to help people with common mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Sessions are usually one-on-one but can also be in couple or group settings, by phone or online.

They can help with:

- talking therapies
- tools and techniques to manage symptoms
- support for those experiencing the psychological effects of managing long-term conditions.

