

Navigating healthcare appointments can be challenging, especially when it comes to ensuring ongoing access to your clinician or service team for follow-up questions or support. With the rise of **online video appointments** and **remote consultations**, it's more important than ever to know exactly how to maintain contact and get the care you need between reviews.

Want to know something interesting? in this guide, we'll cover the key questions you should ask during your first appointment to guarantee smooth communication afterward. We'll explain why clinician qualifications matter more than location, clarify the differences between remote and in-person appointments, and offer practical tips for preparing symptom notes and medication lists. Finally, we'll advise on how to ask questions both during and after the consultation to ensure you're never left in the dark.



Why Clinician Qualifications Matter More Than Location

When booking your appointment, many people focus heavily on whether the clinician is based locally or at a prestigious centre. While location can matter for certain specialist procedures or tests, the qualifications and experience of the clinician are far more important for ongoing care and remote consultations.

- **Expertise defines the quality of advice:** A specialist's credentials, training, and relevant clinical experience impact the accuracy and usefulness of their guidance far more than where they're physically located.
- **Remote consultations increase accessibility:** Remote video appointments mean you can access highly qualified clinicians who might otherwise be out of reach geographically.
- **Ask for detailed information on qualifications:** Don't hesitate to ask specifically, "*Who exactly will I speak to during my appointment?*" to ensure you're matched with the right specialist for your condition.

Checklist for Evaluating Clinician Qualifications

Criteria What to Check Why it Matters Medical Specialism Confirm the clinician's specialist field matches your condition. Specialists provide more expert advice and management. Professional Registration Check they are registered with the GMC or relevant body. Ensures they meet required standards to practise. Experience Ask how many years or how many cases they have handled. More experienced clinicians generally offer higher quality care.

Availability for Follow-up Clarify options for ongoing access or support after initial consult. Prevents frustration and rushed endings after appointments.

Remote vs In-Person Appointment: Why Clarity Matters

One frequent source of confusion — and annoyance — is booking an appointment advertised vaguely as a “consult” without clarity if it is in-person or remote, and what that means for follow-up support.

Knowing this upfront impacts how you prepare and how you expect to remain in touch later. Sometimes location pages imply a physical clinic exists for face-to-face visits, when all consultations are remote. Always confirm: ...you get the idea.

- **Is this appointment a video call, phone consult, or in-person visit?**
- **If remote, which digital platform will be used?** (Zoom, NHS Attend Anywhere, proprietary portal?)
- **What happens if technical issues disrupt connectivity?** Is there a backup contact or protocol to reschedule?
- **Are there any limitations on the appointment length or topics discussed?**

Example Questions to Confirm Remote Appointment Details

1. “Could you please confirm if my appointment will be in person or via video call?”
2. “Can you tell me which app or platform we’ll be using for the remote consultation?”
3. “If the connection is poor, is there a phone number I can be reached on or a way to reschedule?”
4. “Will the clinician be able to review my full medical records during the video call?”

Clear information avoids wasted journeys or last-minute frustrations, and lets you plan how you’ll approach the meeting — crucial when your main goal is **ongoing access** to support.



Preparing Symptom Notes and Medication Lists: Your Best Allies

Whether remote or face-to-face, a well-prepared patient gets more from consultations. Detailed symptom notes and an accurate list of medications help clinicians make informed decisions quickly, saving time and improving

communication quality.

- **Symptom journal:** Keep a simple daily log of symptoms with dates, severity, and triggers.
- **Medication record:** List all current prescriptions, doses, frequencies, and any alternative therapies or supplements being used.
- **Previous investigations or results:** Have key test reports ready to share or summarize.

For remote consultations, having these notes in a digital format means you can upload or forward them ahead of time or screen-share during your appointment.

Tip: Create a Pre-Appointment Checklist

- Confirm appointment date, time, and format
- Prepare questions related to your symptoms or treatment
- Gather medication and allergy details
- Check you have a quiet, private space with good internet for remote consults
- Test your video and audio setup in advance

Asking Questions During and After the Consult: Securing Ongoing Access

One of my top pet peeves is when patients are rushed off a call with no plan for next steps, or vague promises like “we’ll be in touch if <https://www.clickliverpool.com/features/68489-finding-specialist-healthcare-from-liverpool-the-questions-worth-asking-first/> needed.” This is where clear communication pays dividends — and you must ask the right questions to guarantee future contact options and support between reviews.

During Your Consultation, Always Ask:

1. **"Who exactly am I speaking to?"** Get the full name, role, and specialty of your clinician upfront.
2. **"What are the next steps?"** Is another appointment suggested? When and how will it be scheduled?
3. **"How can I get in touch if I have questions before the next review?"** Email, phone line, patient portal, or messages through a GP?
4. **"Will I receive a written summary or care plan after this call?"** This reduces misunderstandings.

After the Consultation, Follow These Up:

- If promised, check you have access to the written summary or test results.
- Test the contact method you were given for quick queries—send a short message or email to check response times.
- If you never received clear instructions about follow-up, don’t hesitate to call or email the clinic administrative team to clarify.
- Keep a log of your communication attempts; this can be useful if you find accessing care difficult.

Summary: Stay Proactive for Ongoing Access and Support

Quality healthcare is about more than a one-time appointment — it’s about building a reliable connection with a trusted clinician and service. By focusing on these key actions:

- Confirm the clinician's qualifications and who exactly you will speak to
- Clarify the nature of your appointment: remote or in-person, platform, technical backup plans
- Prepare thorough symptom notes and medication lists to maximise consultation value
- Proactively ask during and after consultations how to maintain contact and get support between reviews

you can ensure that remote consultations work for you, providing ongoing access to expert advice without being rushed or left stranded. Remember, good communication is your right — not a privilege.

Additional Resources

- [NHS Guide to Online Video Appointments](#)
- [Patient.info - How to Prepare for Remote Consultations](#)
- [GMC Guidance on Remote Consultations](#)