

An icon showing a computer monitor and a smartphone side-by-side, representing digital health services.

## 2 New Consultation types

## Phone consultations

### The idea

- The phone is used to consult (not just triage).
- Patients can be offered an appointment with their usual GP or with any available GP.
- Many follow-ups can be done on the phone as well as new problems.

### Impact

- 60-70% of consultations can be handled entirely on the phone, in an average of 4-6 minutes.
- Where face-to-face consultation required, GP usually decides in first 2 minutes. Some face-to-face consultations are then much shorter (eg examine rash).
- Access improves, especially for carers & people in work.
- DNAs fall up to 80%.
- Interpreters usually don't need to be prebooked for telephone consultations.

### Implementation tips

- Measure actual demand and adjust supply of appointments as it varies during week (Monday often 40-60% busier) and year.
- Provide training in clinical skills to ensure safety and productiveness of phone consultations.
- When moving to a 'demand led' rather than 'supply led' approach, plan how to account for current unmet need.
- Use alongside 'active signposting' to reduce demand.