

Reference: FOI.ICB-2526/304

Subject: Older Adults Accessing GP Services, Good Practice and Complaints

I can confirm that the ICB does hold the information requested; please see responses below:

QUESTION	RESPONSE
<p>I am writing to request further information to better understand how older adults are accessing GP services within your ICB area, particularly in light of the shift towards a "digital by default" approach as part of the NHS 10-year plan.</p> <p>Please provide the following information in relation to your ICB area:</p> <p>1. Mitigation measures in your ICB:</p> <p>The steps your ICB has taken to ensure that older adults are not disadvantaged by the shift to "digital by default" within the NHS 10-year plan.</p>	<p>The ICB has been clear in communications to practices that all 3 ways of communicating with patients (phone, face to face or online) and access to appointments remain open.</p> <p>The ICB has supported interested practices to run sessions for patients wanting to increase their digital confidence using the NHS app and online consultations. Additionally, the ICB has engaged a VCSE (Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise) partner in each of our 3 localities to support patients with accessing healthcare digitally.</p>
<p>2. Examples of good practice:</p> <p>Please provide examples of good practice from GP surgeries in your area that specifically support access for older people, including initiatives to maintain or enhance face-to-face access and ensure they are not adversely affected by the move towards "digital by default".</p>	<p>Many of our practices report that their receptionists or care navigators will support older people to submit their appointment requests with some practices installing ipads in waiting rooms for patients to use to submit online requests either with or without support.</p>

	One PCN has a Complex Care Team who have identified that some frail, elderly patients living at home often struggled to access care for a range of reasons. These included digital exclusion, transport and mobility. By using risk stratification tools they are targeting this group and with the support of a care-co-ordinator ensuring there is parity of access to care for this population.
3. Complaints: Data on the number of complaints submitted in relation to difficulties booking GP appointments in your ICB area between 1 st April 2024 and the 31 st March 2025?	The ICB has received 331 complaints regarding access to GP services during this period.

The information provided in this response is accurate as of 10 October 2025 and has been approved for release by David Jarrett, Chief Delivery Officer for NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire ICB.