

SECONDARY CARE 10 TOP TIPS

Telephone and video consultations (patients)

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- 1** Make sure your hospital has up to date details on record including current address and phone number. If you have a landline and a mobile, specify which you would prefer to use.
- 2** Make enough time for the consultation. Delays are possible in all clinics, including those on the telephone and your caller may be running late. Some video services such as the NHS 'Attend Anywhere' have a virtual waiting room so you can estimate how long you will be waiting.
- 3** Ensure that you have a quiet comfortable space in which to have the consultation, try and avoid busy areas of the house/outdoors with high levels of background noise.
- 4** Be aware that calls to your mobile from NHS hospitals may display as a "Private" or "Withheld" number. Call Guardian packages, used to screen for nuisance calls, can make it difficult for some digital hospital telephone systems to connect.
- 5** Many mobile phones have apps or functions which allow you to record a call. This can be very helpful in remembering the content of the conversation, but it is an important courtesy to tell the other caller that you are doing this.
- 6** As with a face-to-face consultation, it may help to have a friend or family member present. Placing the consultation on speaker phone will help with this and allow everybody present to listen and ask questions.
- 7** Although your care will be under a named consultant, you may be contacted by another member of the team. It is useful to clarify who you are talking to at the beginning of the consultation.
- 8** Normal communication relies a lot on body language. In a telephone consultation the healthcare team cannot see if you are confused or upset. If you don't understand something or would like to go slower, don't be afraid of saying so.
- 9** You may have specific questions you would like answered, it is useful to write these down in advance so that you do not forget.
- 10** Before finishing your appointment, make sure you are clear on:
 - a. When your next appointment is
 - b. Who you can contact if you have any further questions.

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