



VOICE CONNECT
INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION SPECIALISTS

PATIENT PARTNER



“The Silent Receptionist... working away in the background, handling calls that receptionists would normally handle”

Esther Jackson - Practice Manager

“now your patients can book
an appointment at your
surgery...

without the stress”



What is Patient Partner?

Patient Partner is a system that allows your patients to book, cancel, check or change appointments at any time, night or day using their telephone. The system is a PC/Server based solution, which connects to your practice's telephone system. It also integrates with your electronic appointment book, ensuring that it can operate in 'real time'.

At a glance

Patient Partner will help your practice to:

- Extend reception opening hours
- Ease the pain of early morning congestion
- Manage, improve and ease telephone access
- Promote and administer appointments for seasonal/specific clinics

Extend reception opening hours

Annie Taylor, a mother with two young children, wakes up at 7am and finds that her youngest daughter is unwell.

Even though her surgery is closed, Annie immediately telephones them and selects the option to book an appointment. She identifies her daughter by using her telephone keypad to key in their contact telephone number and her daughter's date of birth, which is information she knows off the top of her head.

Annie then goes on to book the first available appointment with any doctor and hangs up the telephone.

"I like the fact that Patient Partner gives our patients the ability to manage their appointments 24 hours a day."

Suzanne Ayles - Practice Manager

The maximum amount of time Patient Partner is available to patients is 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The only time the system is unavailable is during essential clinical database back up periods.

"the around the clock availability reduces pressure... relieving p

Through the use of Patient Partner, you increase patient access, whilst remaining in control of the system and the allocation of appointments. So, even when your practice is closed, Patient Partner is available to your patients, allowing them to book, cancel, check and change the times of their appointments.

Ease the pain of early morning congestion

It's 8.30am, your receptionists are already dealing with patients that have arrived at the surgery, but the queue of waiting patients continues to grow. The telephones are ringing constantly and the stress felt by both staff and patients rises rapidly.

"Now that our surgery use Patient Partner, we find that up to a third of appointments are booked before we arrive at the surgery each morning."

Heather King - Practice Manager

Patient Partner supplies your practice with virtual receptionists who will work for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week booking, cancelling, checking and changing appointments for your patients.

Many practices have found that it takes approximately three months until patients become aware of the availability of Patient Partner.



ality of your virtual receptionist ain for staff and patients”

Patient Partner changes the times at which patients contact your practice to book their appointment, spreading calls over the whole day and consequently easing the pain caused by the early morning rush.

“Now the patients are used to Patient Partner, they are booking appointments at the weekend, the night before or even just before the surgery opens. This has meant that it is now considerably easier for people trying to get through on the phones (for non-appointment related queries) to speak to a receptionist.

We did originally think uptake would be slow - this has not been the case - within 3 months 75% of available on the day, and book ahead, appointments were being booked through Patient Partner.”

Laurie Brown - Practice Manager



Did you know... a significant proportion of telephone calls to your practice come from patients checking the times of their appointments.

Practices that use Patient Partner cut down the number of telephone enquiries they receive at the start of the day, by advising patients to use Patient Partner to check the times of appointments for themselves. This is because the system automatically announces the times and dates of existing appointments.

Manage, Improve and Ease Telephone Access

“The initial benefit for us was the reduction in telephone calls coming into the practice, as the calls for appointments were filtered out and taken by Patient Partner.

This had two effects, firstly the service improved as people weren't waiting as long to get through by phone and secondly everyone's humour improved. Patients weren't as annoyed over waiting times and consequently staff were not so stressed. Another benefit was that for the first time we had an insight into the amount of calls that were coming in and at what times of day we were busiest.”

Esther Jackson - Practice Manager

Full reporting with statistics is a part of Patient Partner, allowing you to monitor the total number of:

- Patients that selected the option to use Patient Partner
- Appointments booked
- Appointments cancelled

“Patient Partner has saved the Practice time by freeing up reception staff to undertake other duties, thereby enhancing patient care. The excellent reporting facility gives valuable information about when and how many calls are made, which allows our practice to realign its staffing structure to deal with patient demand.”

Drag Crnomarkovic - Business Manager

Patient Partner also enhances your current telephone system, by implementing (or improving existing) 'welcome messages' and 'option menus'.

The presence of a welcome message means that when patients telephone your practice, they will be (if they are not already) greeted by an automated telephone greeting. The advantages are that patients are all greeted in a consistent manner and every patient that telephones the practice receives the same information, i.e. emergency numbers, opening/closing times and other valuable details.

When your patients telephone your practice, menu options will direct them to the services they require. The first mandatory menu option will be for Patient Partner. This promotes the importance of the system to patients and encourages them to go on and book their appointments using it.

Promote and administer appointments for seasonal/specific clinics

Patient Partner has additional features that will help your practice to promote and administer seasonal and or specific clinics, such as Flu, Asthma and Diabetes.

It is essential that target groups of patients eligible for each seasonal/specific clinic are notified of their existence and such actions help towards the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) of the new GP contract. Therefore, an additional solution for promoting clinics known as Patient Partner Text is available with the Patient Partner system.

Details of clinics can be recorded with ease and are played to patients during the practice's automated telephone greeting.

This form of promotion ensures that every patient who telephones your practice hears up to date information regarding the current clinics available and can simply select the option to book their appointment.

When your practice runs additional clinics, the numbers of incoming telephone calls increase, as more patients telephone reception to book their appointments. Patient Partner has the capability to administer appointments for seasonal/specific clinics, which reduces the pressure placed upon your reception staff who would normally have to deal with the higher demand for appointments from your patients.

What and who are Voice Connect?

Voice Connect has been developing telephone call handling and processing solutions for the NHS for over 15 years. The company has been constantly evolving throughout this period. Initially it provided voicemail and auto-attendant, then became the UK market leader in call processing solutions and is now using its expertise to develop and deliver product solutions to 'real life' problems. Over 75% of development time and resources are now used to ensure that current technology integrates with third party clinical databases to ensure that GP practices across the UK can continue to adopt Patient Partner.

For more information about Voice Connect and Patient Partner, visit www.voiceconnect.co.uk

Voice Connect successfully completed the NHS IGSoC (Information Governance Statement of Compliance) process, which means we officially have access to NHS digital services, including N3. For your reference, our SIN number is 311554.

Voice Connect is part of the NHS PASA (voice, video and data products framework agreement for the NHS).

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