



Short Case Study

Virtual Outpatients

Patients travelled 2 million fewer miles during the pandemic in Northumbria

Pre pandemic, Northumbria had been innovative with virtual outpatient consultations using Attend Anywhere as part of a Health Foundation Scaling Up Quality Improvement Award. This initiative included their 7 community hospitals.

As they were already measuring miles less travelled (environmental and cost impacts), they were able to continue this work and scale it up during the pandemic.

In 2018/19 only 7% of Northumbria's appointments were held virtually. This has increased to nearly 45% in the past year in 2020/21 with patients travelling more than two million fewer miles between April last year and January.

Patient feedback on the Attend Anywhere appointment system in 2020 showed that patients gave a rating of 98% when asked if they felt involved in decisions about care and treatment. Patients also gave the rating score of 99% for having treatment information explained in a way they could understand. Being treated with dignity and respect was rated 99%. The measurement provides strong assurance that outpatient remote consultation results remain comparable with face to face appointments (Quality Account 2020/21).

Two million miles less travelled were measured.

[Covid: Millions of patient miles 'saved' during pandemic – BBC News](#)

Northumbria Online Consultation (Attend Anywhere)

Welcome to our video call clinic (Attend Anywhere). Please have your patient letter to hand, to help us get you to the right section. Your patient letter will highlight the specialty for your appointment – this will provide you with the information needed to get you to the correct clinic. Once you have found the speciality on your letter (under Clinician and appointment time), please scroll down this page and select the correct one from the grid. In the next paragraph, you will also find some information on how our video call works. Please spend a few moments reading this information before you click on your speciality.

This is a virtual clinic you can link in to wherever you are. Please be reminded that this clinic is only for patients who have been invited to attend an online appointment. You will need internet access and the Google Chrome browser to enter the clinic.

- 1 Click the "Start video call" button.
- 2 You will then be taken to a virtual waiting room and music will play to show that you have successfully entered the room. Your clinician will know that you have arrived and you are waiting.
- 3 When your clinician is ready to start the consultation, they will join you on the screen and the consultation will proceed exactly as if you are in a surgery or clinic room. Your clinician will be able to show you documents and resources, just as if you were sitting across a desk. If your clinician decides that a face to face appointment is necessary, this will then be arranged in the usual way.

Attend Anywhere is completely confidential and secure. Your call cannot be accessed by anyone else. Your clinician will be in a private room, just as if they were meeting you face to face. We strongly advise you to plan your call so that you are in a quiet room too, so that you can hear everything that is said and to ensure that your privacy is protected. At the end of the consultation, a short questionnaire will appear on the screen, asking about your experience with Attend Anywhere. We welcome your feedback so please take a couple of minutes to complete it if you can. Attend Anywhere provides a real opportunity to improve services to our patients, reducing unnecessary travel and risks of delay due to weather or transport issues, and all comments are welcome.

ANNALUISA WOOD, MATRON OF ALNWICK AND BERWICK COMMUNITY HOSPITALS ADVISED THAT

“ Pre pandemic we had started to use virtual consultations, this then became the norm during the pandemic with patients being able to access consultations at home if necessary. Some of our Community Hospitals are 60 miles from the District General Hospital and the use of virtual clinics has an advantage as in some cases patients could have their consultation sooner instead of having to wait for the next clinic date locally and also it supports people at work or have no access to transport, then our Community Hospital team could follow up any investigations locally. We are mindful that some appointments do need to be in person and this is taken into consideration.

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