Post-Consult Message Feature

What is the post-consult messaging feature?

This has been developed by eConsult to allow practices to send a secure one-way message to the patient regarding their eConsult, by selecting a pre-filled message or customising their own. This message is received by the patient as an email from the eConsult system, which means that the patient does not have visibility of your email address, and cannot reply.

Instead, patients are able to send a pre-configured message to the practice, either to acknowledge receipt of a message, or to flag that they have not received a response by the agreed deadline. This message is standard text and acts as a reminder to the practice. The patient can only action this request once the agreed timeline has expired.

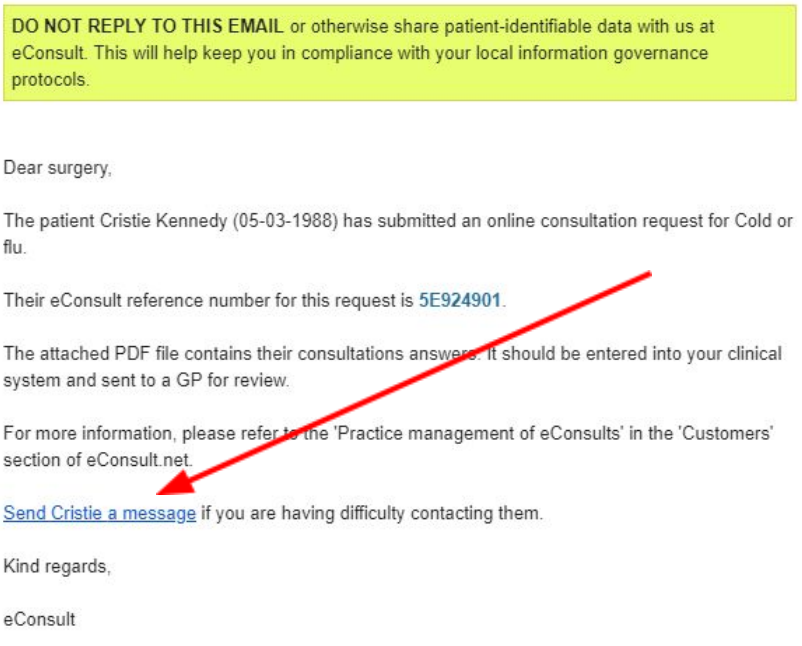
This feature uses Government-standard encryption to ensure the privacy of data *within* the messaging screen and the transmission of data *from* the messaging screen.

How do I use the post-consult message feature?

When a patient completes an eConsult they consent to receiving a secure message regarding their submission. The feature can be accessed by the practice team member by clicking on the **'Send Message'** hyperlink embedded within the original PDF report.

This opens a secure webpage providing the option to send a message. The patient will receive an email with the message and an option to acknowledge the receipt of the message.

Link location in the email received by the practice following submission of an eConsult:



DO NOT REPLY TO THIS EMAIL or otherwise share patient-identifiable data with us at eConsult. This will help keep you in compliance with your local information governance protocols.

Dear surgery,

The patient Cristie Kennedy (05-03-1988) has submitted an online consultation request for Cold or flu.

Their eConsult reference number for this request is 5E924901.

The attached PDF file contains their consultations answers. It should be entered into your clinical system and sent to a GP for review.

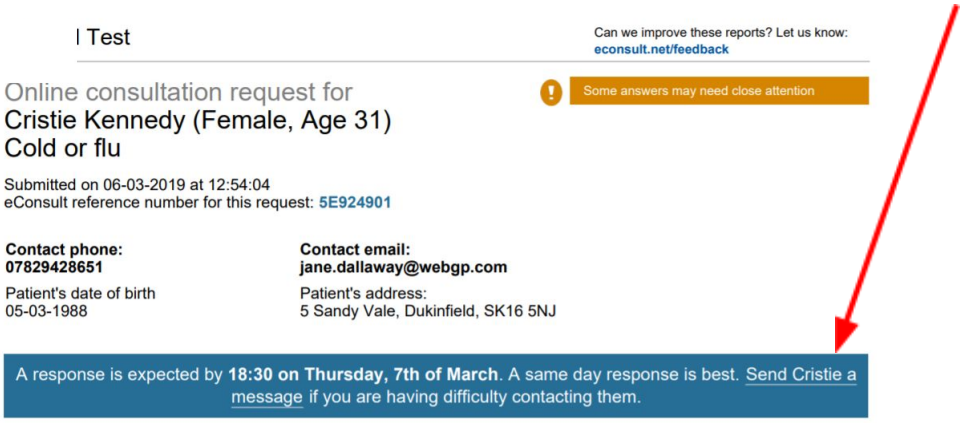
For more information, please refer to the 'Practice management of eConsults' in the 'Customers' section of eConsult.net.

Send Cristie a message if you are having difficulty contacting them.

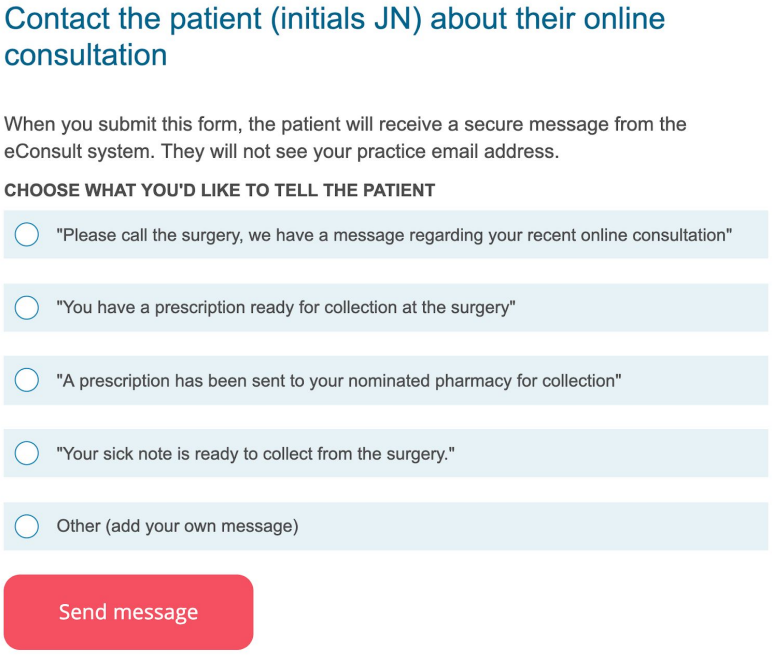
Kind regards,

eConsult

Link location in the eConsult PDF:



When you click on the embedded link via the email or PDF, the following screen will appear:



If you select "Other (Add your own message)" you must tick to confirm there is no personally identifying or otherwise sensitive information in this message.

Guidance on using your own messages

As messages are going from our secure (HSCN) environment to a potentially 'non-secure' environment e.g. Google/Hotmail mail servers, there is a possibility that emails can be intercepted or read by third parties. There is also no assurance who the recipient of the email is (for example shared email accounts/access).

We therefore do not recommend disclosing any patient sensitive information that could potentially be unintentionally disclosed to a third party - the same risks would apply if you decided to enter a dialogue with your patients via email that sits outside NHSmail.

This scenario is also similar to leaving an answerphone message following a failed encounter - one needs to be assured on who has access to the answerphone messages and therefore be cautious on what information is left on the message.

Ultimately the Information Governance risk will sit with the practice when using the eConsult post consult messaging feature and end-users need to be mindful of the potential risks of third party disclosure of information.

With that being said, we recommend generic messages being used in the 'Other' field. Examples could include:

- "We have reviewed all your blood results and are pleased to confirm that they are all normal"
- "A prescription for painkillers has been sent to your nominated pharmacy. Here is a link for self help advice on back pain. Http://..... "
- "Thank you for sending your online consultation. This has been reviewed by Dr Smith and he has recommended starting with some over the counter painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. He has also recommended you can self-refer to our Physiotherapy service by contacting ..... Should you have any further queries, please contact the practice."

Some examples we would **not** recommend as they contain 'sensitive' information:

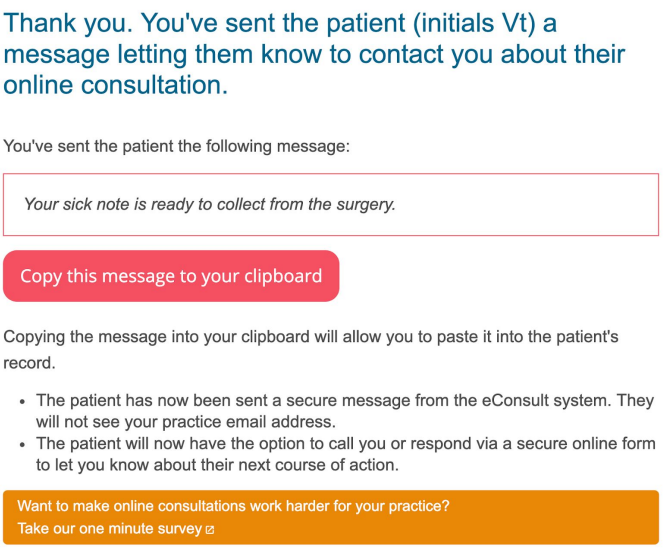
- "Your swab results confirm that you have chlamydia. We have issued a prescription for azithromycin antibiotics which you can now collect from Boots"
- "Given your history of HIV, we recommend you contact reception to book a face to face appointment so we can examine you"

How is this information entered into the patient record?

Before sending the message you can copy and paste your own message into the patient record, or manually add it to the patient record. This acts as a record within the patient's notes that a post-consult message has been sent, for example: to inform the patient a prescription is ready for collection.

You can also copy the message once it has been sent by clicking on the below '**copy this message to your clipboard**' button.

Please note, the patient will not have the option to respond back to the practice once you have sent a post-consult message, other than to acknowledge that they have received your message.

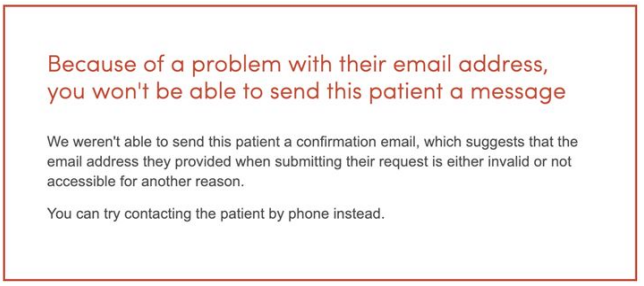


The post-consult message feature is to respond to the patient regarding only the eConsult submission, this message should not be used for other correspondence between the practice and patient. **This link is valid for up to 14 days.**

If a patient provides an incorrect email address

When you click on 'SEND MESSAGE', if the patient has provided an email address that we cannot verify, this message will appear:

Therefore, an administrator or clinician will need to call the patient with the telephone number provided in the eConsult.



Do:

- Respond by the end of the next working day – for administrative eConsult submissions you can send a holding message
- Use this feature to respond to the submission of the patients' eConsult
- Use post-consult messaging in instances of failed contact with the patient by phone
- Add a note to the patient record regarding your post-consult message
- Make sure that the sender of the message has the appropriate approval to do so
- Consider the most appropriate form of communication when corresponding with a patient, to achieve the best outcome for the patient

Don't:

- Send patient identifiable information using the 'Other' option, such as the patient's date of birth/address/medical condition
- Send a message to the patient regarding another matter, this post-consult message is should only relate to the specific eConsult that the patient has submitted
- Forward either the post-consult message URL (web link) or the eConsult receipt email to non-approved users or users outside of the practice
- Send urgent communications via post consult messaging, all urgent communications should be handled over the phone