

Q&A: MAYFLOWER MEDICAL GROUP (DEVON)

List size: 31,00 patients

Receiving up to 400 eConsults a day

The Practice Manager perspective:

Why did you choose to purchase eConsult as a practice? Our previous Practice Manager chose eConsult about 2 years ago but we weren't using it heavily until the last few months.

What concerns or expectations did you have prior to mobilisation? Our biggest concern was from staff thinking it would create more work. They stopped being concerned when we showed them that eConsult was being built in as part of their daily workload.

How quickly were you able to mobilise? We had it in use already, however we have been working as part of the Devon Digital Accelerator for the last year to change our model to a total triage using eConsult, which we went live with in February 2020.

How easy was it to embed within your existing processes/clinic? We have embedded it in slowly over the last 2 years, including changing all of our clinics to an eConsult-based triage over the last few months. We worked on clinic templates for about 6 months before launching.

How much support did you/your team need from eConsult? We needed a significant amount as we are across 6 sites with over 100 staff. We had one member of staff dedicated to this model who worked closely with Mark Thomas (*eConsult Transformation Manager*) and then relayed the information back to the staff.

What steps did you need to undertake locally to make this a success? We did lots of presentations to staff and sent letters out to patient to get everyone familiar with a new process.

Any tips for other practices looking to use this? We found it best to give everyone (staff and patients) as much information as possible to help them get used to something new.

Anything you'd change in your set up approach? It possibly would have helped if we had broken the process down into even more detail for patients, as some of the feedback was that the letters that we sent out were not clear enough for some people.

How has this helped your team prepare or manage under current circumstances, with Coronavirus? It has helped us massively because

any resistance we were getting from patients and staff before Covid-19, has now gone. People do not want to come into the surgery and they are more willing to use eConsult.

The Reception / Admin team perspective:

Did you have any concerns or expectations prior to using eConsult? We were concerned about how patients would access the service, particularly the elderly. We were also concerned about how many appointments would be available through it. We were happy that it was another avenue for people to use as the phones get very busy.

How did you deal with patient requests before eConsult? Most patient requests came through via the phone which caused lengthy waits for patients.

How has this helped? Call volume and time waiting has decreased greatly.

What do you think made this a success? The uptake of the eConsult system and how easy it is to use for the majority of patients has made it as successful as it is.

How easy was it to start using it? We have all found it very user friendly – we picked it up very quickly.

What did you change? Each day little changes were made to ensure enough appointments were available and that clinics were set up correctly. We used feedback from patients a lot in the early stages to make changes too.

Any tips for other receptionists/admin staff using this? It really will make your working day run a lot more smoothly if a bulk of your patients are encouraged to use this route in. It's easy to do from home.